

THE BRITISH IN IOWA



JACOB VAN DER ZEE

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THE BRITISH IN IOWA







WILLIAM BROOKS CLOSE

# THE BRITISH IN IOWA

BY  
JACOB VAN DER ZEE



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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The story of the British in Iowa as told by Mr. Van der Zee in this volume consists of two essays: one tells of the *British Emigrants to Iowa*; the other relates the history of the *British Invasion of Northwestern Iowa*. The first essay is a general survey of the English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh elements in the population of Iowa; while the second essay is a more detailed study of the English Colony in the vicinity of Le Mars.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND EDITOR  
THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA  
IOWA CITY IOWA



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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Few phases of the history of the world so strongly and so steadily excite the imagination as the swarmings of the races of mankind across the surface of the earth. Mongols and Tartars in Asia, and Huns, Goths, Norsemen, Moors, and Turks in Europe: these and other peoples successively supplied much of what is spectacular and fascinating in the chronicles of the Old World. Equally striking and picturesque is the migration by land and sea of whole tribes of barbarian Angles and Saxons from the forests of northern Germany, and of Danes and Normans at a later day, to make their homes in the British Isles.

To Americans who like to claim British and European origins as their own, the early wanderings of the world's great human family extend a powerful appeal; but more intimate and personal is the story of the peopling of the New World, not only by hordes of emigrants from the Old World but also by their American-born descendants. Covering a period of four centuries that extraordinary story, though now complete in its main outlines, has never been fully told and can

not be so long as the American continents continue to drain the population reservoirs of older lands.

For reasons chiefly economic and religious, millions of the sons and daughters of Europe have abandoned their ancestral haunts to seek better homes in the vast open spaces of settlements overseas. Other millions, lured by the call of the wild and moved by the spirit of adventure, likewise forsook friends and kindred to try their fortunes beyond the Atlantic. In North and South America they braved the hostility of scattered tribes of aborigines and the hardships incidental to pioneering in the wilderness. The struggle to conquer nature, begun by these enterprising colonists generations ago, has been continued by their descendants, constantly reënforced by fresh accessions from all the racial stocks of Europe.

Pausing to look back over the years consumed in the long process of subduing and occupying a continent, anyone who reflects upon man's ceaseless battle with the forces about him must be impelled to take pride in the results already achieved: cities and towns and farms, raised as if by magic from the soil, now stand as monuments to commemorate three centuries of human achievement.

Impressed by what has been done to convert a wilderness into the abode of more than one hun-

dred millions of people, every citizen of Iowa who lets his fancy wander back into the century not yet ended since permanent settlements in his State began naturally inquires who the first inhabitants of his neighborhood were, where they came from, and what part they played as builders of the State and nation. From a contemplation of the Iowa pioneers he may go even farther back and seek to discover who his paternal and maternal ancestors were, where they dwelt, and what they did in their workaday world; and being somewhat of a genealogist at heart, he would, if he could, construct his family tree with roots striking deep into the remotest past, not altogether from reasons of family pride but because he finds here a panorama of bygone days that pictures life itself.

There is, to be sure, in all this nothing suggestive of the practical or materialistic; but as the passing years awaken State and local pride, popular interest in such matters is almost certain to increase. In Iowa, long called the garden spot of the Mississippi Valley, historians have not yet followed all the streams of native-born Americans and of foreigners that have poured into its fertile fields: no one has fully told of the expansion of the American people from the Mississippi River westward to the Missouri. Much remains to be done before the Iowa chapter in that remarkable

romance of immigration and settlement, begun less than ninety years ago, can be called complete.

For more than a century and a half after its discovery, the Iowa country continued to be little more than the home and the haunt of a few thousand Indians. To this wilderness primeval, white men — French, British, and later Americans — had resorted to trade with the native inhabitants; some had come to explore the prairies and valleys; and just a few had established homes in the neighborhood of Keokuk. The real invasion and occupation of the Iowa country, however, did not begin until the government of the United States opened wide the gates to immigration in the month of June, 1833.

The march of the frontier of civilization from the Mississippi River westward and from the State of Missouri northward forms the Iowa chapter in the fascinating story of the expansion of the American people across the continent. By what means and agencies the vast domain acquired from the Red Men was eventually placed in the hands of settlers, who the original grantees of land patents were, and whence the pioneers came — these are some of the questions to which the future historian of Iowa must find answers.

The two studies presented in the following pages are designed as contributions to the larger



task. The first treats in a more or less general way of the British element in the population of the Commonwealth of Iowa; and the author believes it should inspire those who would like to have a more detailed and intimate view of the subject with the possibility of further historical investigation in that field. The second study relates to the interesting episode of the coming of several hundreds of Britishers to that portion of Iowa which was the last to be occupied by home-seekers. This part relates largely to northwestern Iowa though settlements were also made in Minnesota.

Nine years ago the author began gathering information on the British invasion of northwestern Iowa, but not until the summer of 1921 could time be found to finish for the press what other activities had so long delayed. In the pursuit of his task the writer sought and obtained help from many sources, and acknowledgements are due Mr. C. W. Pitts of Alton; Mr. Ed Dalton, Judge C. C. Bradley, and Mr. Adair G. Colpoys of Le Mars; and Mr. S. R. Watkins of Chicago, Illinois. Especial thanks are due Mr. James C. Gillespie, publisher of *The Le Mars Sentinel*, for permission to use the files of old newspapers in his possession. Without the frequent quotation of "scoops" and gossip news items from those volumes the author feels that contemporaneous American interest in



the "colony" centering about Le Mars could never have been fully grasped.

The author is grateful also to Mr. John W. Probert, manager of Close Brothers and Company of Chicago, for an outline sketch of the general history of the firm and corporation with which he has been connected almost from the beginning. Mr. Probert's account, though based on memory, tallies closely with the facts as acquired from other sources. In answer to an inquiry after the books of account of the early years of the firm in Iowa, Mr. Probert replied that the records were all gone by now. Consequently, the author can not vouch for the accuracy of statements about the extent of the company's operations, derived as they are from contemporaneous newspaper announcements. Authentic information on the operations of a typical land company in that part of the Iowa wilderness which was the last to be brought under the dominion of man would have been especially valuable because, so far as the author knows, no such matters have yet been made the subject of investigation and permanent record in Iowa and perhaps not in any other part of the Middle West. In passing, one can not help but regret that valuable materials on the history of the settlement of the State such as the books of account of land companies are being lost or destroyed.

In conclusion, the author wishes to acknowledge the encouragement received from Professor Benj. F. Shambaugh and the assistance rendered by William B. Close, Esq., the founder of the British "colony", who has for many years been living in England. His excellent pamphlet on farming in northwestern Iowa, published in 1880, contains a great amount of indispensable material; and his letters from a London hospital, in the autumn of 1921, when he was recovering at the age of nearly seventy from the effects of an operation and a bad attack of influenza, furnished many facts not otherwise discoverable. Mr. Close stated that although it seemed rather strange to him that so much interest should be taken in his old settlement he was glad to aid in every way. To Mr. Henry H. Drake, an old Oxonian and for forty years a resident of northwestern Iowa, the author is greatly indebted for his kindness in helping to round out the story in many respects.

JACOB VAN DER ZEE

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
IOWA CITY IOWA



PART I  
BRITISH EMIGRANTS IN IOWA





## I

### POINTING THE WAY TO IOWA

Until the year 1850 English-speaking but native-born Americans overwhelmingly predominated in the flow of immigration to the settled portions of Iowa. Hailing from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and the New England States, they were the descendants of the racial stocks that had originally peopled the Atlantic seaboard areas.<sup>1</sup> Their names for the most part bore witness to an English ancestry, but many of the Iowa pioneers could not have concealed a different extraction — such as Scotch, Irish, Dutch, German, Moravian, Swedish, and French. They were, indeed, the offshoots of all the strains represented in the population of the older States.

JOHN B. NEWHALL

In the early forties, when the British public was being showered with journals, travels, letters, and notes relating to America — all too frequently prepared by superficial observers — there appeared upon the lecture platform in various parts

of England, the home of his ancestors, a man who brought his hearers first-hand information of the American frontier and of the social and economic condition of its people. He spoke not from books, nor did he draw upon imagination for romance or distorted pictures of that vast, boundless, open country on the western shore of the Mississippi. On the contrary, he came before his listeners as a witness of the things his eyes had seen in that primeval wilderness.

In 1834, the second year of Iowa pioneering, John B. Newhall had joined the rush of emigrants to the Iowa country, and so he could make the proud boast that he was one of the first to lay eyes upon the prairies blooming there in solitude. In 1841 he had written a book on Iowa,<sup>2</sup> and having made his home in this inviting region he could truthfully say to the English people in 1844:

I participated in rearing the first land marks of a young and rising state — new cities have sprung up before me — I have witnessed the great work of civilization in all its various stages, from the lone cabin of the frontier settler, to a happy and intelligent population of 170,000 souls!<sup>3</sup>

At Birmingham, Liverpool, London, and other cities he preached the utility of emigration.<sup>4</sup> Appalled by the ugliness and wretchedness of life in those crowded centers in contrast with the easy circumstances of the same class of people in

America and animated by a sincere desire to promote the happiness of his fellow men, Newhall in 1844 published a handbook and guide for prospective British emigrants. Englishmen naturally questioned his motives and jumped to the conclusion that he was a speculator or land agent — “as though it were impossible, in the Nineteenth Century, for a man to be actuated by a Spirit of Philanthropy, of humanity and love.”

Newhall found it necessary, therefore, to assure his readers that nothing could be further from the truth than that he was mercenary: he asked them to believe that there was “a loftier purpose to live for, than bowing to the shrine of Mammon.” And, despite their prejudices against the United States, he invited their attention to the claims of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, especially the latter two, “possessed of a Soil unrivalled in the variety and excellence of their productions, and rapidly settling, by a people, who are bound to the Anglo-Saxon race by the indissoluble ties of kindred, religion, and above all of Language.”

To the British agriculturalist as well as to the industrious artisan, merchant, capitalist, trader, and day laborer, he pointed out all the advantages of the New West, especially describing the Territory of Iowa: the face of the country, soil, products, timber and woodland, rivers, prairies, cli-

mate, and seasons, public lands and land offices, the best fields for settlement, the average prices of articles of family consumption, the average prices of cows, horses, sheep, and necessary farm implements, the principal towns, and the moral and social character of the people. Furthermore, Newhall gave explicit instructions about the long voyage across the Atlantic, the choice of ship provisions, and routes to the American interior.

These matters constituted the sort of information then required — particularly by the emigrant societies which had sprung up in many parts of the mother country. Of that movement so silently but rapidly spreading through English shires, Newhall recorded his conviction that “associative Emigration is the true principle to work upon, it will do more to mitigate the woes of our common humanity, than the numberless political agitations of the day; it will effectually strip emigration of the miseries and hardships that have so frequently attended the isolated wanderer.”<sup>5</sup>

Most interesting was Newhall’s answer to the Englishman’s question whether he could succeed with \$500 in his pocket. He did not hesitate to say that the industrious and prudent man could lay the foundation of a handsome property with such a sum: for less than \$400 the emigrant could be comfortably settled upon an eighty-acre tract



supplied with a good house, yoke of oxen, horse, cow, twelve sheep, poultry, pig, wagon, plough, harrow, seed, and thirty weeks provisions until a small crop was raised for subsistence. To quote his exact words: "And if you do not happen to have a 'Home sick Wife,' I can see no reason why, with ordinary Good Luck, blessed with patience and perseverance, you should not prosper equal to your utmost expectations."

Thus established and with \$100 left over, the British emigrant was warned not to let the surplus ooze away. A capital error generally made by emigrants was to spend their last dollar on land at the outset, thus dooming themselves to several years of up-hill work and perhaps discouragement. Another piece of Newhall's advice reads: "If you have £500, purchase 320 acres, a half section; cultivate it well, load your own flat boats with your own produce, take it to New Orleans, and realize a handsome return, without having it wasted away by the commissions of the Merchant."<sup>6</sup>

Too many English people, in those days when hunger led to the repeal of the Corn Laws, imagined that setting foot upon American soil would mark the end of all their sorrows; whereas in reality arrival in the New World too frequently only aggravated their woes. For months the news-

papers of England were filled with accounts of the return home of hundreds of disillusioned emigrants who brought back doleful stories of their experience in New York and other Atlantic ports. These disappointed ones became a stumbling-block to others who heartily yearned to improve their forlorn condition. Lest such destitute, disheartened persons should become a criterion of the wisdom of emigration to the Valley of the Mississippi, Newhall declared:

Can we expect men to be benefitted, who rush headlong and blindly to America, without any fixed object, or ultimate aims, either of occupation or place of abode? . . . . I am willing to venture the assertion, that America possesses all the advantages, and inducements for the industrious, persevering and frugal Emigrant, now that it ever has from the day of its first discovery. But those advantages are not to be found "picked up" on the pavements of every Atlantic city . . . . It is a mistaken notion, if people suppose the hogs run about the streets there, already roasted, with a fork stuck in their backs, crying come "Come, Eat me." Here has been one great cause of failure and disappointment.<sup>7</sup>

Newhall also cautioned Englishmen against the "runners" at the ports, a set of harpies who fleeced and robbed emigrants of their money at every opportunity; he begged them not to lose sight of the fact that while hundreds had returned



home, thousands had remained in America and were doing well; and he emphatically declared that if they did not have sufficient nerve to endure privations for a few months in Iowa, they had better never leave their homes, for success would not crown their efforts.<sup>8</sup>

ALICE MANN

Before the era of railroad building in Iowa, the State had been introduced to the people of the United States not only through the newspapers of the time but also through tourist handbooks and emigrant guides, of which a goodly number had been placed on sale before the Civil War. That some of these descriptive sketches, prepared primarily for American consumption, found their way to the British Isles there is little reason to doubt; but the information which Britishers acquired on the general subject of emigration was obtained more because they sought it than because Americans brought it to them.

For a considerable time the United States had been the most favored field of emigration in Great Britain, not even Canada and Australia excepted. The British public had been placed in more or less intimate touch with the northern portion of the Union as the best suited for immigration: by the year 1850 several gentlemen had written books

based on tours of the West or residence in America, and such testimony was eagerly sought because people believed it to be unprejudiced and impartial. Eventually, Alice Mann, a printer of Leeds, took the results of their practical observation and experience along with Newhall's instructive little books (to which her only objection was "that they are rather flowery") and out of such materials wove a compact guide which went through several editions.<sup>9</sup> Having compiled such information mainly for the working and industrial classes, Miss Mann clearly described conditions in the mother country<sup>10</sup> in the following terms:

Emigration must continue to be a subject of ever-increasing interest to the British people. Hemmed in as we are by the sea in all directions — the greater part of the land in our own country monopolized by the high aristocratic families — with a population steadily increasing in the face of diminished demand for labour in consequence of the ever-increasing productions of our mechanical powers, — the desire to emigrate to new and virgin soils, where every man may, with comparatively little difficulty, become an independent landowner, — cannot fail to extend, with the increase of information as to the extraordinary capabilities which the United States as well as the British Colonies, offer to the free labourers of this and all other countries of the Old World.<sup>11</sup>

But these foreign lands were a well spring of hope also to the heads of middle class families who

found it increasingly difficult to maintain their households respectably and to establish their children in overstocked business or professional careers. To quote Miss Mann's words:

Competition for subsistence is every day growing more keen; and the anxious parent is puzzled what to do with his rising sons and daughters. One year the manufacturing class complains of distress, and another year the agricultural class. Both classes are alike diligent, anxious to work, and to work hard provided the gains of their labour promise to maintain them decently. But often their labour is in vain, and they feel as if their place at Nature's Board were already occupied, and they must turn their eyes elsewhere.<sup>12</sup>

From such intense competition at home industrious farmers, laborers, and mechanics were asked to look to the boundless, unoccupied lands where "no man need suffer from want of the means of physical comfort; no fear need be felt as to the future of a family, no matter how numerous." Individuals who contemplated a change of scene were, however, properly cautioned in these words:

Not that men have to work less diligently there than they do at home. By no means! It would be practising a gross deception, were we to inculcate that any man could thrive in the States or in the Colonies, without the practice of steady, persistent, daily industry. The idle and the drone will be a poor man



there, as he will be at home. He is a cumberer of the ground everywhere. But let a man work with a will, let his labour be directed by even the most ordinary share of intelligence, and then we say he has a prospect of success and prosperity before him in these new lands, such as but rarely falls to his lot in this old and labour-stocked quarter of the globe. He has to submit to inconvenience and perhaps distress, in leaving his own native land, and voyaging his way across the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean. Many dear ties have to be severed; but he thinks of the promised land before him, and looks forward with hope to the inheritance he is to bequeath to his children.<sup>13</sup>

To the wide-awake, industrious Englishman who regarded economic conditions at home without a sign of hope, Miss Mann declared, many regions of the earth still unpeopled and American States like Iowa still waiting for settlers beckoned with positive assurance.<sup>14</sup> Such a man, fortified by steadiness, resolution, and a stout heart, need not hesitate to venture out on the emigrant's career — he could make up his mind to “rough it” for several years “before he can settle quietly down under his vine and fig-tree, and gather in their fruits”. In Iowa, which was the Far West of that day, the thriving towns of Burlington, Dubuque, Davenport, Fort Madison, Iowa City, and Bloomington (now Muscatine) were commended as presenting excellent opportunity for skilled labor. Miss Mann's delineation of the face of the Iowa

country also carried hope to those who wanted better returns from agriculture. Her attractive statement reads as follows:

The State of Iowa, in the picturesque beauty of its scenery, and the richness of its verdure, much resembles the finest portions of the south of England counties; though, in native richness and fertility, it far surpasses any portion of this country. Here and there it is partially wooded, somewhat like a gentleman's park in this country, being moderately undulating, and no where, in the southern part of the State, rising into hills or mountains. All is green and cultivable. On the margins of the rivers there are occasional ranges of "bluffs," intersected by ravines.<sup>15</sup>

The prairies, climate, productions, crops, timber, seasons, and other matters of interest were likewise briefly touched upon. Indeed, an Englishman by the name of Rubio who had written a book on his rambles in the United States was quoted as speaking in the highest terms only of Iowa "which stands A 1 for emigrants, in his estimation". Declared Miss Mann:

We can imagine few conditions of life more favourable to the enjoyment of earthly happiness than that of a settler on a rich piece of land in Ohio, Illinois, or Iowa: he is in the midst of plenty — the land teems with abundance — labour is never without its reward — and its fruits are all the labourer's own. He may not be rich in gold or silver coin; but if the land he tills be his own, and that land produces more than

sufficient for his own wants and the wants of all his household, has he not here the elements of the most substantial happiness? Let him take courage, then, and struggle onward.<sup>16</sup>

People who showed the white feather, "Miss Nancy" emigrants who returned to England after a try at the New World, were held up as dismal illustrations of the sort of stuff that could not succeed anywhere.

#### GEORGE SHEPPARD AND THE CLINTON COUNTY SETTLEMENTS

During the winter of 1849 George Sheppard, an Englishman, delivered several lectures at Hull, England, extolling Iowa as a State where "health, wealth and beauty are spread out in every direction". So forceful was his presentation of the advantages of emigration to America that a society was organized for the purchase of a tract of land, and Mr. Sheppard was engaged to help make the selection of a site.

On May 15, 1850, the emigrants sailed from Liverpool on the ship "Columbus" and reached New York after a six weeks' voyage. Upon arriving at Davenport, Iowa, they made arrangements with Cook and Sargent (land agents and bankers), to assist them in their undertaking. On the stage route to Dubuque, at a place nine or ten



miles northwest of De Witt — the seat of government in Clinton County and then a small town with a log cabin tavern — the emigrants purchased about two thousand acres of oak timber and prairie land and divided it according to the sums of money each had invested in the enterprise. Upon a hill which commanded a beautiful view east, south, and west, they laid out forty acres in one-acre lots and called the village Welton. High hopes were naturally entertained of the future of this place, situated on the military and mail road between Davenport and Dubuque. Writing to friends in England in the summer of 1850, George Sheppard noted that land speculators were watching the colonists' movements, and he prophesied "that within twelve months from this not an acre will be purchasable near us except at double the government price."

A number of buildings rose on the spot which these people had chosen — hotel, shops, stores, and dwellings. For a time the colony flourished; but its members having been trained as mechanics and artisans — tailors, bookbinders, painters, and others — found pioneer life unattractive, and so they forsook their farms and returned to their trades, scattering to other towns throughout the country. This village which died out is still known as "Old Welton". The name is also perpetuated

in another village not far to the south and in the township where it lay, "a monument to the designs of its founders."

Of a different character were the English families which began to settle in Eden and Center townships west of the town of Camanche in the same county. Nearly all are said to have come from the village of Killingham, Lincolnshire, England. Bringing capital with them, they bought out the pioneers of the region and in 1879 were reported as largely engaged in stock raising, thrifty and enterprising, with broad fields and fine farmhouses. In their vicinity the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad selected a site for a station; and when the town-planners were debating a name for the place, the superintendent of construction, standing by a pile of rails and noting the words "Low Moor, England" stamped upon them, succeeded in securing the adoption of that name. Since then Englishmen have always been found in this neighborhood.<sup>18</sup>

During these years William Lake, an Englishman by birth and president of St. George's Benevolent Association of Clinton, Iowa, interested himself in immigration to such an extent that he was in communication with the British Working Men's Association. He declared his belief that if the horribly cruel and unjust quarantine regula-

tions of the port of New York were improved, immigration into the United States could be doubled.<sup>19</sup>

## II

### STATE ENCOURAGEMENT OF IMMIGRATION

What effect Newhall had in England there is no way to show; and the same may be said of the influence of other writers.<sup>20</sup> There is, however, sufficient evidence to prove that as early as 1850, when the United States census first began to record the nativity of the nation's inhabitants and when the occupation of the woods and prairies of Iowa had been going on for twenty years, settlers of British birth had already appeared upon the American frontier. Of the 192,214 people in Iowa at that time, it appears that 20,969 were born in foreign countries; and of these more than half were British—4885 Irish, 3785 English, 1756 British-Americans, and 712 Scotch.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, it is a noteworthy fact that the people of British birth exceeded those of German origin not only in 1850 but also in every census year for three decades thereafter.

No direct effort (other than by means of such booklets as those written by John B. Newhall and Alice Mann) seems to have been made before 1860



to induce British people to leave their homes and come to Iowa. The Dubuque Emigrant Association, organized in 1858, may have brought its influence to bear on emigrants after their arrival at Castle Garden in New York City, but it did not directly encourage emigration from the British Isles, though a pamphlet<sup>22</sup> intended for people in the eastern States very likely fell into the hands of foreigners as well. Not until observing Iowans awoke to the fact that the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin were actively engaged in luring emigrants within their borders did Iowa legislators provide for a commissioner of immigration in New York City.<sup>23</sup> At his office there during the years 1860 and 1861 he imparted information and distributed literature to all who came; but before his retirement he pointed out the futility of approaching foreigners whose final destination in America was generally determined previous to their sailing from Europe. During the Civil War and the reconstruction period following, the government of Iowa did practically nothing to encourage immigration to the State.

Competitive publicity measures on the part of neighboring States, however, again served to shake the Iowa legislature out of its persistent indifference to the subject. Created by law in 1870, the Iowa State Board of Immigration began its duties

by printing and distributing small circulars and sending out newspaper notices inviting correspondence from persons who desired information about settling in Iowa. A. R. Fulton, secretary of the Board, prepared for publication in various languages a pamphlet on the agricultural, mineral, and other resources of the State.<sup>24</sup> Various railroad companies and the Hamburg Steamship Line were instrumental in carrying such advertising matter to Europe at very slight cost to the Board. Governor Merrill's letter to the Workingmen's Emigrant Association of London was also widely distributed among the branches in the cities and towns of England, Scotland, and Wales. The Board commissioned Edward T. Edginton of Lucas County, Rev. Alexander King of Ireland, and Alexander A. Wise of London to disseminate information throughout the British Isles. Both King and Wise as resident agents were afterwards highly praised for their valuable services in attracting attention to Iowa, Mr. King having contributed many ably written articles to leading religious and secular journals in his country.<sup>25</sup>

Because four of the members of the State Board of Immigration of 1870-1871 were foreign-born and represented the Dutch, the German, and the Scandinavian elements in the population of Iowa, the Irish of Iowa expressed considerable dissatis-

faction through the Roman Catholic clergy of the diocese of Dubuque. To the Hon. Richard O'Gorman of New York City they addressed a letter for the benefit of their fellow countrymen in Ireland on the subject of emigration. Furthermore, because Governor Merrill, in alluding to the foreign-born people in the State, had omitted to mention the large Irish element, thirty-seven Irish clergymen took him to task by asking whether their religion or politics or both were a barrier to recognition. Thousands of Irishmen, they declared, were prosperous, independent farmers in a State that was even then taking the lead in American agriculture. The clergy directed attention to the vast land holding of various railroad companies and the terms on which immigrants could still purchase farms; they also showed the rapid spread of Catholicism in Iowa as another special advantage, and they offered to supply any further information on the subject so close to their hearts. In conclusion, they promised to appoint an agent to represent them at New York in the spring of 1871.<sup>26</sup>

Immediately after his appointment, Edward T. Edginton left Chariton, Iowa: he arrived in Liverpool on August 18, 1870. Here he at once opened an office; but owing to the lateness of the emigration season and the lack of printed matter adver-



tising Iowa he could do little except to collect the names and addresses of persons who intended to emigrate in the coming spring. When the pamphlets on Iowa did arrive, there were not nearly enough to supply all applicants. Mr. Edginton had a list of two thousand agents residing in all parts of the British Isles whom he also intended to furnish with an ample number of the State's booklets: his repeated requests for more and also for a cheaper document for wider distribution were not complied with because the State Board of Immigration had too little money at its disposal for such purposes.

How many individuals Mr. Edginton induced to go to Iowa by his distribution of six thousand copies of the pamphlet, he could not state, as most of them booked their passage to America through local passenger agents; but he distributed pamphlets and information to all who were interested in Liverpool, London, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Lincoln, Leicester, Nottingham, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Hereford, Bristol, Neath, Swansea, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness, Stirling, and other cities.<sup>27</sup> He also inserted a short advertisement in a leading religious paper and received over five hundred letters of inquiry.<sup>28</sup>

In the report of his activities Mr. Edginton

suggested that the Iowa legislature make more liberal provision not only for printed matter but also for the payment of agents "who should be constantly employed during the entire year in visiting and lecturing, in the agricultural districts, especially." If this were done, he had no doubt that the result would equal if not surpass the most sanguine expectations. Judging from the fact that the State of Iowa paid Edginton \$121.25 for freight, postage, and wrappers on pamphlets and \$150 as salary during his seven months of service abroad, he was probably one of the agents who had been employed by the Board of Immigration to serve both the State and such railroad companies as had agreed to pay most of their salaries.<sup>29</sup>

The second State Board of Immigration appointed for the years 1872 and 1873 also sought to reach British ears, like its predecessor, through Alexander A. Wise at London.<sup>30</sup> How thoroughly he did his work, there is no report to show. During the next six years, however, the State of Iowa did practically nothing to attract settlers to its huge unoccupied areas.

Despite the operations of railroad and other agencies in the land markets at home and abroad, men like Governor John H. Gear realized that the State was not receiving a fair share of the im-

migration which had been coming to the West. He informed the General Assembly that American consuls in Great Britain and Germany had notified him that there would be a very large emigration of most desirable people to the United States in 1880.<sup>31</sup> Because this prediction had been "corroborated by the public speeches of many of the leading English statesmen, and by utterances of the influential press in discussing the agricultural conditions of their country" and because neighboring States were openly bidding for such settlers, Governor Gear urged the State legislature of Iowa to enter "the race for empire". Accordingly, for the last time in the history of the State, the General Assembly in 1880 appropriated \$5000 annually for two years, \$1200 being designated as the annual salary of a commissioner, the remainder to be expended by him in showing "to the people of the United States the natural advantages and resources of the state of Iowa." George D. Perkins of Sioux City, who was appointed to the new position, at once announced that according to his interpretation of the law no part of the funds at his disposal could be spent in foreign countries.<sup>32</sup>

The last reminder of the State's undertaking to lure trans-Atlantic emigrants to its vacant lands is a four-page pamphlet prepared in 1881 by J. Duehurst Shuttleworth of 45 Sunny Road, South-



port, England, who gave his representations added but apparently unauthorized weight by signing himself "Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Iowa". An English newspaper contained the following editorial mention or advertisement of Iowa and its self-styled commissioner:

The State of Iowa invites the attention of Emigrants to the following facts: It is the first State in the amount of Indian Corn grown, in the number of pigs raised, and first in Wheat. For the Dairy Iowa has no equal; at the World's Exposition in Philadelphia bearing off gold and silver medal award on Butter; in St. Louis, 1878, on Cheese; and again on Butter at the International Dairy Fair, New York, in December, 1879. Iowa lies midway between Texas south and Canada on the north, and in belt of population, commerce and wealth. Canada exported, in 1877, 13,659,949 pounds of Butter, and produced 25,000,000 bushels of Wheat; Iowa, the same year, exported 27,262,724 pounds of Butter and produced 54,500,000 bushels of Wheat. Ontario, Canada, had in 1875 of Horses, Cattle and Pigs, 9 to the square mile. The farmers of the State of Iowa, of whom a large number are from Great Britain, own of Horses, Cattle and Pigs, 5,236,482, or 95 to the square mile. Of the 64,000,000 bushels of Corn received in Chicago last year, 29,709,340 bushels were from Iowa. By the laws of Iowa, any British subject, whether naturalized or residing in the United States or not, may exercise *all the rights* of a citizen in regard to buying, holding or the transfer of property.<sup>33</sup>

A pamphlet entitled *Iowa Resources and Industries* was the last one prepared at State expense for home and investment seekers and was published in 1885 by J. P. Bushnell, Commissioner of Immigration, with the endorsement of the State Executive Council. Though not issued for circulation in the British Isles, it undoubtedly served the general purpose of keeping Iowa before the eyes of English-speaking people everywhere. The document seems to have been intended to fall into the hands of visitors to the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition and to the North, Central and South American Exposition — both held at New Orleans. Iowa could not withhold a suitable display on both these occasions because a similar participation at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 had served to attract both capital and immigrants to the State.<sup>34</sup>

Meanwhile the railroad companies whose trunk lines had been pushed westward at great expense had bent every energy to sell the thousands of acres of public domain granted to them by a generous government: so long as these lands along their right of ways lay townless and unimproved or unused for agriculture or stock raising, the railroads had little more than a desert to tap. By purchase from these corporations and from homesteaders and preëmptors, land companies had pro-

cured titles to vast bodies of land adjacent to the railroads. The agents of the railroads and the private land companies, therefore, left no stone unturned to unload their extensive holdings upon foreign immigrants and land-seekers from the older parts of the United States. In every possible way — by newspaper advertising, by pamphlets, and by agents in foreign lands — they sought to bring settlers to the territory tributary to their newly-built lines across Iowa.<sup>35</sup>

How much these private agencies exerted themselves to persuade Americans and Europeans to purchase land in the State of Iowa can never be known until their books and records have been thoroughly searched for information of that character. By the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century very little vacant or unsold land, it is believed, remained in the hands of railroad grantees or large land companies in Iowa.

### III

## BRITISH ELEMENTS IN THE POPULATION OF IOWA

### THE IRISH

Although every portion of the British Isles had contributed its quota of emigrants to the "Eden of American agriculture", Ireland surpassed the other parts of the United Kingdom owing chiefly to a succession of famines. Beginning with only 4885 in 1850, natives of the Emerald Isle in Iowa rapidly increased to 20,896 in 1856, to 28,072 in 1860, to 40,124 in 1870, and reached their highest total of 44,061 in 1880. Although these Irish immigrants were to be found in practically all the townships of all the counties of the State, they seem to have been attracted chiefly to the larger towns such as Dubuque, Clinton, Davenport, Burlington, Keokuk, Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Council Bluffs.

A list of the counties in which the Irish element attained its greatest numerical strength in 1880 may be taken to indicate the localities to which the Irish have been most partial in their choice of homes. These counties, together with the num-



ber of Irish-born residents, may be listed as follows:<sup>36</sup>

DUBUQUE	3325	JACKSON	946	DELAWARE	675
CLINTON	2473	DES MOINES	925	WINNESHIEK	673
SCOTT	1671	BUCHANAN	910	BLACK HAWK	660
ALLAMAKEE	1550	LINN	894	FAYETTE	628
POLK	1466	MONROE	800	CRAWFORD	559
POTTAWAT.*	1382	WEBSTER	784	HOWARD	547
LEE	1042	MUSCATINE	767	POWESHIEK	531
JONES	962	IOWA	751	WOODBURY	512
JOHNSON	952	WAPELLO	739	CEDAR	472
CLAYTON	948	CHICKASAW	701	UNION	458

\* Pottawattamie.

Later census enumerations do not alter the foregoing list appreciably, although in 1885 Greene County appeared with 560 Irish-born settlers, all the others having suffered decreases except Polk, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury where the growth of Des Moines, Council Bluffs, and Sioux City account for a considerable increase.

Since 1880 the sons and daughters of Old Erin resident in Iowa have shown a rapid falling off as evidenced by the following statistics: 42,524 in 1885, 33,006 in 1895, 22,578 in 1905, 14,299 in 1915, and 10,686 in 1920. Death has thinned the ranks of the Irish immigrants of half a century ago, and their places have not been filled by fresh recruits from the old home-land; but their children and grandchildren constitute a numerous progeny,

Irish Catholic communities being found in most of the counties of the State to-day.<sup>37</sup>

#### THE WELSH

The Welsh contingent in Iowa's foreign-born population has always been relatively small. In 1880 only 3,031 natives of Wales were reported as residents of the State, being grouped with the English in the census returns for counties.<sup>38</sup> In subsequent years they are separately reported in the records as follows: 3,436 in 1885, 3,439 in 1895, 2,621 in 1905, 2,048 in 1915, and 1,753 in 1920. Slight and almost negligible as their number was in comparison with the State's total population, the Welsh have somewhat clannishly flocked to certain counties as is shown in the following figures:<sup>39</sup>

WELSH IMMIGRANTS	1885	1895	1905	1915
MAHASKA COUNTY	406	442	236	157
LUCAS COUNTY	282	49	107	68
IOWA COUNTY	250	214	146	111
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	200	166	95	87
HOWARD COUNTY	185	151	133	88
LOUISA COUNTY	156	164	96	69
JOHNSON COUNTY	144	119	77	49
WAPELLO COUNTY	138	230	170	99
POLK COUNTY	132	153	194	237
JASPER COUNTY	58	125	115	125
MONROE COUNTY	50	319	362	256
APPANOOSE COUNTY	11	121	49	61

Further investigation shows that in several of

these counties Welshmen congregated in certain neighborhoods, as, for example, in Columbus City and Elm Grove townships in Louisa County where church services are still conducted in the mother tongue; Des Moines, Garfield, and Harrison townships and the towns of Beacon and Oskaloosa in Mahaska County; the towns of Cleveland and Lucas in Lucas County where John Llewellyn Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, was born of Welsh parents in 1880; Hilton and Troy townships and Williamsburg in Iowa County; Forest City in Howard County; Union Township in Johnson County; Kirkville and Ottumwa in Wapello County; Lincoln Township with the village of Wales in Montgomery County; Des Moines in Polk County; Poweshiek Township in Jasper County.<sup>40</sup> Most of the Welsh in Iowa to-day are engaged as miners in the coal fields; but wherever they are, their eisteddfods or annual singing contests and their cymanfa or church conventions have survived the transplanting of these folk from their tiny fatherland. The *Y Drych*, a newspaper published at Utica, New York, has many readers among the Welshmen of Iowa.

#### THE CANADIANS

Not inconsiderable has been the flow of British-Americans, chiefly Canadians, to the Iowa country.

Census totals in every year except 1915 ranked them next to the English-born inhabitants of the Hawkeye State: 1756 in 1850, 6133 in 1856, 8313 in 1860, 17,907 in 1870, 19,451 in 1880, 19,087 in 1885, 17,882 in 1895, 14,306 in 1905, 10,980 in 1915, and 8929 in 1920. Being already Americanized, in the sense that their environment in Canada differed very little from that in the United States, they could easily adapt themselves to Iowa conditions: consequently these newcomers scattered to every nook and corner of the State. Taking the figures for 1880 and 1885 as a criterion and comparing them with more recent returns, Canadians have always been most numerous in the following counties:<sup>41</sup>

CANADIANS	1880	1885		1880	1885
CLINTON	821	617	FAYETTE	451	330
POTTAWATTAMIE	555	542	JACKSON	427	310
WOODBURY	538	956	LINN	408	417
GRUNDY	533	234	BUCHANAN	390	247
WINNESHIEK	510	401	CERRO GORDO	377	337
BLACK HAWK	507	419	MARSHALL	368	373
FLOYD	459	391	POLK	353	408
TAMA	457	263	BUTLER	349	269
SCOTT	340	247	CHEROKEE	321	306
JONES	328	220	DELAWARE	318	252
PLYMOUTH	326	549	DUBUQUE	314	284

Cedar Rapids, Clinton, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque, Le Mars, Fort Dodge,



and Sioux City were the principal British-American centers as late as 1895; and by the year 1915 the relative distribution in the counties above named had not appreciably changed.<sup>42</sup> It is interesting to note in this connection that as cheap Iowa lands were invaded by British subjects from the region north of the Great Lakes, so in more recent years Canada's agricultural provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were largely occupied by thousands of young farmers from the Hawkeye State. Indeed, to that exodus was chiefly ascribed the decline of Iowa's population during the first decade of the twentieth century; and if the facts were fully known, they would probably show that Canada has more than made good earlier losses to Iowa.

#### THE SCOTCH

Although the stream of Irish immigration began to diminish in volume after 1880, the high-water mark of Scotch immigration to Iowa was not reached until five years later as shown by the following figures: 712 in 1850, 2169 in 1856, 2895 in 1860, 5248 in 1870, 6885 in 1880, and 7993 in 1885. Where the natives of Scotland settled in Iowa can be quite accurately determined from the census returns for the most typical years. Like the Irish they spread to all the ninety-nine coun-



ties, but consciously or unconsciously they favored a few as will be seen by the figures in the table.<sup>43</sup>

SCOTCH	1880	1885		1880	1885
BOONE	303	379	LINN	181	218
TAMA	302	224	POWESHIEK	169	146
POTTAWATTAMIE	207	304	KEOKUK	117	408
WEBSTER	188	203	JASPER	141	191
POLK	185	215	GREENE	96	166
SCOTT	181	142	DUBUQUE	126	150

Despite the fact that old Scotch settlers have been passing away in the past three decades, the comparative ranking of the counties was about the same in 1915, although Monroe and Woodbury counties had received considerable accessions. Always rather thinly distributed over the State, the canny Scots have nevertheless gathered to a certain extent in such towns and cities as Boonesboro, Moingona, and Angus, Traer, Des Moines, Davenport, Council Bluffs, Dubuque, What Cheer, and Sioux City.<sup>44</sup> What Cheer owes its name to the exclamation of a Scotchman when he discovered coal in the neighborhood. Like their Welsh countrymen, many have worked as colliers in Iowa mines.

#### THE ENGLISH

Although the number of English-born people reported in Iowa in any census year never equalled

or exceeded that of the Irish until 1915 when both elements totaled 15,741 and 14,299 respectively, the English must not be thought to have made a poor showing as immigrants. On the contrary, they and their descendants constitute a respectable portion of the State's population at the present time. The crest of the English wave struck Iowa five years later than did that of the Irish, as may be gathered from the following returns: 3785 in 1850, 8942 in 1856, 11,522 in 1860, 16,660 in 1870, 22,519 in 1880, and 25,974 in 1885.

These immigrants like other Britishers settled most thickly in certain portions of the State, but this result was not necessarily due to conscious selection on their part. In 1895 Des Moines, Dubuque, Sioux City, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Clinton, What Cheer, Cedar Rapids, Burlington, Ottumwa, Mystic, Oskaloosa, and Le Mars led in the number of English-born inhabitants, thus helping to explain the totals for counties in earlier and later census years as well. In 1915 the English-born residents of Iowa were dwelling in much the same places as before, except that several coal-mining communities had come to be prominent centers since 1890. Statistics for about one-fourth of the counties of Iowa for the census years of 1880, 1885, 1895, and 1915 show that in most localities there has been a marked decrease in the num-

ber of English-born residents in Iowa. The figures are as follows:<sup>45</sup>

ENGLISH IMMIGRANTS	1880	1885	1895	1915
POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY	1121	1157		402
DUBUQUE COUNTY	1062	980		478
CLINTON COUNTY	892	833		351
POLK COUNTY	872	1128		1472
MAHASKA COUNTY	669	725		271
SCOTT COUNTY	611	490		380
DELAWARE COUNTY	583	508		109
LUCAS COUNTY	493	516		188
JOHNSON COUNTY	484	305		133
DES MOINES COUNTY	462	420		178
BLACK HAWK COUNTY	458	437		513
LINN COUNTY	429	479		463
FAYETTE COUNTY	412	374		186
PLYMOUTH COUNTY	365	601		204
BOONE COUNTY	331	656		250
KEOKUK COUNTY	178	652		137
WOODBURY COUNTY	230	636		845
GREENE COUNTY	280	488		124
MONROE COUNTY	224	174	449	560
JASPER COUNTY	387	365	441	365
BUTLER COUNTY	278	217	182	350
APPANOOSE COUNTY	137	219	687	331
WAPELLO COUNTY	293	352	502	321
CERRO GORDO COUNTY	335	340	376	311

#### DECREASE OF THE BRITISH ELEMENT

Judging from State and Federal census totals, natives of Canada and Ireland practically ceased emigrating to Iowa by the year 1880; natives of

Scotland and England by the year 1885; and Welshmen by the year 1895. Since then their numbers have gradually decreased: death has taken its toll among the oldest of them and newcomers from across the sea have not arrived in sufficient force to keep the British element constant in the population of the State. How rapidly the pure Scotch and English strains have vanished is clear from the records which show that the number in 1920 was only about half that in 1885:

NATIONALITY	1885	1895	1905	1915	1920
SCOTCH	7,993	7,037	5,693	4,947	3,967
ENGLISH	25,974	23,411	18,263	15,741	13,036

#### TOTAL BRITISH-BORN CONTRIBUTION TO IOWA

How many Britishers have at different times found homes in Iowa, not even the census figures can adequately reveal. Some of them came and died in the State before the census enumerators could record their presence; some resided in the State a few years and moved on without being counted in the census years. A rough estimate of the British contribution to Iowa for the past eighty years may be based on the combined totals of the years 1885 and 1915 which probably represent two generations of foreign-born Irish, Canadians, Welsh, Scotch, and English: approximately 150,000 emigrants from the British Isles and



British possessions have helped to swell the population of the State at various times.

In conclusion it is interesting to observe how this British contribution has compared with other foreign-born elements in the Iowa museum of human stocks and races. It is a mistake to assume that because the Germans and the Scandinavians have loomed large in the bulk of European immigrants in Iowa during the past thirty years they have always preponderated. It is worth noting that all census returns on nativity from 1850 to 1880 show that the combined total of Irish, Canadians, Welsh, Scotch, and English exceeded that of any other nationality. Since then, however, German-born immigrants have easily ranked first in number. Moreover, it was not until 1905 that Swedes and Norwegians stood next to the Germans, Irish-born and English-born inhabitants ranking fourth and fifth. Even in the year 1915 the entire British-born element did not compare unfavorably with the North Europeans as evidenced in the following figures:<sup>46</sup>

GERMANS	88,450	ENGLISH	15,741
SWEDES	25,683	IRISH	14,299
NORWEGIANS	20,239	BRITISH AMERICANS	11,080
DANES	18,955	SCOTCH	4,947

The clannishness so characteristic of German, Scandinavian, Dutch, and Bohemian settlements



in Iowa has not been duplicated by the British-born to any noticeable extent: the latter have always been more thinly diffused throughout the State,<sup>47</sup> perhaps because the language difficulty never seriously differentiated them from their English-speaking American neighbors. The problem of adjustment and adaptation to the New World quite naturally possessed no terrors (for those who had no linguistic handicap to overcome, whereas in the case of all other foreigners the same difficulty very much retarded the process of Americanization. Whether Teutonic peoples have been on the whole a more welcome addition to the body politic of Iowa than the British, students of ethnology will have no easy task to prove. However that may be, the industrious and self-respecting descendants of all foreign-born immigrants who sought and found a livelihood within the borders of the State have no reason to lament their lineage. On the contrary, their foreign ancestry should spur them on to create in Iowa, with its wonderful natural resources, a State and a society superior to any that their trans-Atlantic forefathers knew; for after all the real wealth of every State is its people.



PART II  
BRITISH INVASION OF NORTHWESTERN  
IOWA



## I

### THE CLOSE BROTHERS

Only once in the history of the University of Cambridge (England) have three brothers attained the distinction of making the varsity crew,<sup>48</sup> and that was about fifty years ago. Eight times they rowed against Oxford in the annual races on the Thames. These celebrated oarsmen, two of whom were presidents of the Cambridge University Boat Club, were John Brooks Close, James Brooks Close, and William Brooks Close. A fourth brother, Frederick Brooks Close, having elected not to go to Cambridge, joined a friend farming in the backwoods of the Alleghany Mountains in Virginia.<sup>49</sup>

#### FIRST VISIT TO IOWA

It was in the year 1876 that William B. Close received an invitation to bring to the United States a university four to compete in the centennial regatta at Philadelphia. He persuaded some Trinity College men to make the journey. Upon their arrival in America in August, the visitors were given quarters in the middle of the



Quaker city (not in the country as the Centennial Committee had promised), with the result that before the races took place all the young Englishmen came down with malarial fever, and consequently they failed to make much of a showing. What happened then may be told in Mr. Close's own words:

Nevertheless, one day while practising and rowing a course, I found my slide in the boat became very stiff. I completed the course with the result that I bruised myself so badly that I could not sit down without the help of cushions. The crew went to Cape May for a week-end; and while the other boys were out for a training walk on Sunday afternoon, being unable to join them for the reason above stated, I sat down on a vacant chair on the verandah and entered into conversation with a gentleman who I soon found out came from Quincy, Illinois — Mr. Daniel Paullin. He had a son and a daughter with him. In the course of conversation on that day and next week-end he told me how he had made his fortune by buying lands in Illinois in the early sixties, which had grown very much more valuable, and stated that he was going to start his sons in Iowa in the same way as the same opportunity occurred. He invited me to go West to pay him a visit at Quincy, and volunteered to lead an expedition into Western Iowa. Accordingly, when I had recovered from this bad attack of malaria a couple of months after, together with my brother Fred, who came from Virginia to join me, we made our way to Quincy, Illinois, and

shortly afterwards with one of his sons we went through Des Moines to some of the western counties, hired a buggy, and for about a week we traveled from village to village taking in the general topography of the country. On my return to Quincy I became engaged to Mr. Paullin's eldest daughter.<sup>50</sup>

#### THE PURCHASE OF IOWA LANDS

Assured by Mr. Paullin that the West offered stronger inducements to a young man than any country across the water, the brothers returned eastward, William spending the winter in England; but in May, 1877, they were out in Iowa again. They looked carefully into the subject of land investments and in the end were fully convinced of the desirability and safety of putting part of their capital into lands.<sup>51</sup> During that year they also studied pioneer farming and stock raising in all their aspects, and then bought nearly three thousand acres at \$3.50 per acre in the neighborhood of what is now the town of Ricketts in Crawford County.<sup>52</sup>

This purchase of land proved to be the first of a long series in northwestern Iowa, then the most sparsely settled portion of the State. Why the young men chose to begin operations there in preference to other parts of the New World was later very interestingly set forth by William B. Close in an English periodical:

When I left Cambridge several years ago I had already made up my mind that if I left England and engaged in stock raising and farming generally, it was to the North American continent I should go. No other part of the world, it seemed to me, offered the same advantages; but the question as to what part of that continent to settle in, I thought it best to decide after I had taken an exploring trip through Canada and the States.

My sympathies naturally inclined me towards Canada, as being under the British flag, but dismissing from my mind all thoughts of settling in a country where "clearing" has to be done, and where the best portion of a man's life is spent in getting his farm fit for cultivation, I soon found that for stock raising and sheep farming Canada could not compete on equal terms with those States and territories where winters are shorter, and where maize or Indian corn is grown, in addition to swedes, turnips, peas, &c. Had I, however, intended to go in only for wheat growing, I should undoubtedly have chosen the Red River valley, in Manitoba, but as I was more bent on stock raising, I turned my back on Canada and went to look up a brother who had a small stock farm in the backwoods of the Alleghany Mountains, in Western Old Virginia. I did not stay long there — good lands were scarce and dear — and although more than fifty miles from a railroad, were held at £14 to £16 per acre.

Nor did I stay long in the eastern part of the State. Virginia is, as the Yankees would say, "played out," tobacco has exhausted the soil, and I was offered some fine-looking estates with large trees and grand

old mansions at a much less rate than good lands in the back woods. Also I formed a very bad opinion of the lower class of population; everywhere I went I saw far too much loafing about at the saloon doors, and the blacks would only work just sufficiently to keep themselves from actual starvation. So, with my brother, I turned towards the Western States, passing through and stopping in Pennsylvania, where, again, good lands are very highly priced, and in Illinois, which was too settled for my purpose. At Quincy, Illinois, I met a very well-informed American gentleman, who strongly advised me to visit North-Western Iowa, and informed me that when his two sons had finished their education at Harvard University he intended to settle them there. On our way we passed through the State of Missouri, a magnificent country, but cursed with a most wretched and shiftless population, and I then made up my mind I would have nothing further to do with the South with its "low whites and coloured gentlemen." The eastern part of Kansas and Nebraska we liked more than any country we had yet seen, but fever and ague we found too prevalent in Kansas, and in Nebraska water was not as plentiful as it should be for stock; wells were frequently over 100 feet in depth.

We then moved into North-Western Iowa, and were at once enabled to endorse the favourable opinion given us by our friend in Illinois. After a long and careful investigation we made up our minds we would not spend more time and money in seeking for a better region for stock raising and sheep farming, North-Western Iowa combining it seemed to us every



favourable circumstance. My brother at once resolved to leave Virginia, and, after settling matters at home, we bought lands in Crawford County, and have no hesitation in saying that neither of us have for a moment regretted our choice.<sup>53</sup>



## II

### FARMING THE VIRGIN LAND 1878 - 1879

After taking up their residence at Denison the two Close brothers at once divided their purchase into quarter section tracts and let contracts for the construction of buildings and the breaking of the prairie sod. A frame house of the simplest and cheapest design was erected upon each of the twenty farms: its dimensions were sixteen by twenty-two feet with an eight-foot ceiling in the two rooms downstairs and four and a half foot side walls and slanting ceilings in two rooms upstairs, painted and double-boarded outside and plastered within, "perfectly wind and water tight and warm", all at a cost of about \$250, including labor.<sup>54</sup> The barn was a rough affair, and the cost of such an improvement besides a well came to about \$100. "Breaking" a certain portion of each farm for cultivation was done by contractors at the rate of \$2.00 per acre.

Northwestern Iowa in a state of nature commended itself to these Englishmen who wanted quick returns because they were not compelled to

spend the best part of their lives "cutting down trees, uprooting stumps, and clearing away heavy logs" at a cost of from fifteen to twenty dollars per acre as in a timber country: on the contrary, the work on the prairie was very simple, necessitating only the ploughing of the sod to a depth of a few inches. Thus, it was said, a good team of three horses or mules and a sixteen or eighteen inch plough could break up two acres of prairie sod a day, there being no rocks, stones, roots, or other impediments to contend with.<sup>55</sup> The months of May, June, and part of July — the breaking season — were spent turning as much of the three thousand acres as possible in order that the sod might rot thoroughly before the sowing of the next year's crops, the newly broken land yielding no returns in 1878. The Closes then sublet some of their farms to tenants and worked some directly on their own account.

As landlords in Iowa the young Englishmen began to operate on a principle which was gradually perfected during the next half dozen years. For the enlightenment of landowners in England, the following description of their system of letting farms was published in the mother country:

We came to the conclusion that, however good theoretically might be Dalrymple's<sup>56</sup> system of farming a very large area, it would not pay in the end as

well as letting the farms to the renters for an equal share of the crop—*i. e.*, we provide the tenant with land ready for cultivation, a small but good house with rough stabling or sheds, and also the seed for the crops, while the tenant provides everything else—labour, machinery, horses, etc., and puts our share of the crops into the granary, we having divided the crop, equally, bushel per bushel, as it comes from the thrashing-machine. Our agreements with the tenants are very strict, and we reserve the right to put other labour on at their exclusive charge if we are satisfied they are not doing their work in a proper way. By this system we can farm a very large area with a minimum of trouble, and are thus able at the same time to turn our attention to stock raising and sheep farming. We also noticed that the farmers, as a class, were extraordinarily careless in the way they looked after their own horses and machinery, and we naturally thought if they took so little care of their own property that they would take still less care of ours, and calculated that it would be more profitable to put into an increased quantity of lands the large amount of capital which on Dalrymple's system would be needed for horses, machinery, and perishable property. Even if we did not some years secure as large an average of returns as Dalrymple, we should be amply compensated by the greater amount of lands we held, and we felt confident that they would materially rise in value, as has been the case, and we also calculated that a bad year such as 1878, when wheat was struck with blight, would be a far less serious matter to us. We had no difficulty whatever in finding renters on

our terms, and as new breaking is particularly adapted to wheat, we had by far the greater part of our land sown with that cereal.<sup>57</sup>

The Close system did not consist merely of holding virgin land on the chance of a rise in value: on the contrary, they built houses, ploughed the sod, and improved their property so as to make it productive of income, wherein they conceived lay the distinction between legitimate business and speculation in land.<sup>58</sup> Tenants met the rent for wheat lands in kind on the half-share principle; and they paid an average of \$2.00 per acre for Indian corn lands, owing to the difficulty of collecting it in kind. Tenants of the Close farms were thus directly interested in the yield; and when the harvest of 1879 was gathered in, the Close brothers published the following statement of the expenses and receipts of an average farm — namely, “Soldier Farm” on the northwest quarter of section fourteen in Soldier Township, Crawford County:

## EXPENSES IN 1878

	£	s.	d.	
Cost of 160 acres of land at 14s.				
[\$3.50] per acre . . . . .	112	0	0	[\$560]
Breaking 90 acres at 8s. [\$2.00]				
per acre . . . . .	36	0	0	[\$180]
House, stable, and well . . . .	69	7	0	[\$346.75]



Seed . . . . .	16	10	0	[\$ 82.50]
Taxes for farm and buildings . . . . .	3	12	0	[\$ 18.00]
Total . . . . .	237	9	0	[\$1187.25]

## RECEIPTS IN 1879

The yield on this farm from 90 acres only was 1,373 bushels of wheat, or an average of  $15\frac{1}{4}$  bushels per acre. Our share thus amounts to  $686\frac{1}{2}$  bushels, the farmer having received a like amount. By the last advices . . . . we could sell the wheat at the granary door for 3s. 9d. [93 cents] per bushel; thus:—

$686\frac{1}{2}$  bushels wheat at 3s. 9d. [93 cents] per bushel . . . .  
 £128 14s.  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. [\$638.45] A net profit to us of 54 per cent  
 on the capital invested . . . .

Of course circumstances make this year an exceptionally good one, but taking last year's prices of 2s. 5d. [60 cents] per bushel, the lowest it has ever been in our neighbourhood, the net profit would still be over 35 per cent, with only 90 acres in cultivation.<sup>50</sup>

The year 1879 turned out to be a very good one for the young investors: owing to the failure of crops in Europe, high prices prevailed in America. In the illustrative figures quoted above no account was taken of deterioration, but that was more than counterbalanced by the increase in the value of the farm. At the same time more of the prairie sod on each farm was broken in 1879 for cultivation in 1880.



### III

## THE CLOSES EXTEND THEIR HOLDINGS

Having embarked upon the investment of capital in land and pleased with the prospect of their operations, the two Close brothers decided to extend their acreage; indeed, they would have expanded their holdings in Crawford County if more virgin land had been available at a reasonable price. Finding the best areas bought up in that county, they turned to the counties farther north where they were informed on good authority — probably Daniel Paullin — one of the finest and most fertile portions of the United States had been fearfully scourged by grasshoppers and where the pioneers were then offering to sell their holdings at a sacrifice.<sup>60</sup>

Without waiting to see how the balance sheet would stand in 1879, at the end of the year 1878 the Closes authorized their purchasing agent, Mr. Paullin, to buy the Bloodgood lands in Plymouth, Cherokee, and Woodbury counties. Accordingly, at the rate of \$2.40 per acre they obtained 16,080 acres of the most perfect land in Elkhorn, Portland, and Preston townships of Plymouth County

— an event which a Le Mars editor greeted with the headline, "Hail Britannia!" They were reported as negotiating for 50,000 acres more, and as planning to make Le Mars their headquarters in February, 1879. A large number of English farmers were expected to occupy at least one-half of these lands, if one may believe the newspaper story which ends with the words that "not only our county but northwestern Iowa will receive an important addition of sturdy, thrifty, well-to-do, law-abiding immigrants that will add materially to our growth and prosperity."<sup>61</sup>

Meanwhile their brothers, John and James Close — who were in England engaged in the banking business of an uncle, Sir William Cunliffe Brooks, John at Manchester and James at Blackburn — had learned of the probable success of the venture. Because the indoor life did not suit him James threw up his position and joined the boys in Iowa in time to join in the purchase of the Bloodgood lands.<sup>62</sup> John, on the other hand, having a wife and children, resolved to stick to his job in England, eventually becoming very wealthy; but he furnished the three brothers in America with a good deal of money to invest not only for himself but also for his English friends.<sup>63</sup>

It is clear that the Close brothers were convinced that if it was necessary to take chances in

order to make money no two risks were in the long run better than those which had never failed man since the world began: the risk of the fruits of the earth and the risk of the spread of population westward. They had learned the lesson that the growing of grain and the raising of live stock in America were still in their infancy. Even in the depth of the commercial depression of 1877, "when about half the American nation was going through the bankruptcy court, and when people were saying the future of trade was loss and not profit", William B. Close realized "that, notwithstanding, the farmers of America as a class were making money." A few years before, corn had been burned as fuel on Mississippi River steamboats and wheat had been left to rot in the fields of California simply because the cost of transportation to places where grain was needed was prohibitive.

Eventually, however, according to a well-informed English observer, "the means of transportation had been developed to an extraordinary extent. Railways and canals had been made far beyond the traffic requirements of the country, and when in the depression of 1874-8 there was less to carry, the fiercest competition ensued between the companies. Grain was at one time carried from Chicago to New York, 1,000 miles, for 10 cents

per 100 lbs., or less than a fourth of the price that had been charged a few years before, and simultaneously freights across the Atlantic were reduced from 10s. to 5s per ton. Of course most of the railway companies went into bankruptcy, but the discovery was made that it is not so much 'the long haul' as the terminal charges which constitute the cost of transport; and the eventual consolidation of rival and insolvent systems, together with the increased tonnage which followed the reduction of rates, confirmed the policy of cheap freights.<sup>764</sup>

In the summer of 1879 William B. Close was reported as having purchased from John Bloodgood and wife and Louise Stanton, widow, \$34,740 worth of land in Plymouth, Woodbury, and Cherokee counties. Another Englishman, R. G. M. Graham, also invested heavily in lands in this region.<sup>65</sup>



## IV

### HEADQUARTERS AT LE MARS

Le Mars became the headquarters of the Close brothers because it was a natural gateway to the unoccupied lands of the neighboring counties: that virgin region became the scene of their operations because it promised the most excellent returns on their investment of time and money. Chicago, the greatest live stock and produce market in the world, whose prices regulated all other markets, was accessible by reason of a fair network of railroads: the Illinois Central in Plymouth, Woodbury, and Cherokee counties; the Sioux City and St. Paul which traversed Plymouth, Sioux, O'Brien, and Osceola counties; and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul which crossed Sioux and O'Brien counties. These lines made marketing possible: without them there could have been no promise of better things to come.

Le Mars was founded some time after the first inhabitants made settlements in Plymouth County. What is now the Illinois Central Railroad had been extended to this region from Iowa Falls on its way to Sioux City in 1869. With the railroad



came town-planners from the East; and when the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad was projected through the same region, Le Mars was laid out at the junction of the two routes and in 1873 was made the county seat in place of Melbourne. Thus, accessible markets to the south, north, and east became the lodestone to attract farmers to cheap lands richly endowed by nature in all the counties of northwestern Iowa. Immigration to these unoccupied lands at once began to boom, although the grasshopper plague continued unabated several seasons and dampened the ardor of hundreds who might otherwise have joined the rush. To prove how the arrival of railroads brought people to this region one needs only to note the increase of population during the first "railroad decade" as compared with previous years.<sup>66</sup>

But even so, in view of these fine advantages coupled with the natural riches of soil and a healthful climate, it is surprising that northwestern Iowa still offered such a vast quantity of cheap land and claimed so comparatively few settlers. The explanation is not far to seek. When in the year 1867 the United States government opened these lands "for sale and preemption, they were eagerly bought up by speculators, who had heard of the fame of this region".<sup>67</sup> These speculators at once put such prices on their lands that

the poorest class of settlers passed on to the cheaper regions farther West; and for seven or eight years the value of land remained almost stationary.

It was because a few of the speculators, who usually resided in eastern cities, were hard pressed for ready cash that the Close brothers were able to get some very good bargains. Furthermore, another circumstance played into their hands: the country had acquired a bad name from the ravaging visitations of grasshoppers in recent years. The latter fact did not, however, discourage the Closes who had made a thorough study of the situation and felt sure that the grasshopper pest had pretty nearly run its course in this region as it had done in other places: "North-Western Iowa being no longer the frontiers of the settled portion of the country, these incursions are becoming much less frequent, and when the grasshoppers do come, it is only in scattered flights, damaging a wheat field here and there."<sup>68</sup>

Convinced of the financial soundness of their undertaking, the Closes were not long in enlisting the interest and capital of other English university and public school men. British farmers and small capitalists seem to have been in considerable distress at that time, as was also the "cadet" who had no future in the old country. The idea of

land-owning in America and the ability of America to feed the world, which had begun to work a momentous social and economic change in England, now offered a solution of the English country gentleman's difficult problem—"how to recover his rents, and provide for his younger sons."<sup>69</sup> A great deal of correspondence appeared in the press on the question "What to do with our Boys?"

William B. Close saw the opportunity and lost no time in acquainting his friends in England with the possibilities of the new country. In November, 1879, he wrote letters which appeared in *Land and Water*, the newspapers of Manchester, and *The Times* of London,<sup>70</sup> setting forth the reasons why he settled in northwestern Iowa, general information about the State of Iowa, the experience of the Closes with farming in its different branches, their method of letting farms, and a statement of the expenses and returns on a typical 160 acre farm. So interesting and valuable are Mr. Close's letters about grain growing, cattle and hog raising, and sheep farming that if space did not forbid they would be worth republishing in this connection. Suffice it to say, the writer was so well known in England as a Cambridge oarsman that his reports attracted much attention.

In December, 1879, according to the largest London daily,<sup>71</sup> the Closes owned forty 160 acre

wheat farms which they had let out to tenants, supplying the land ready for cultivation, a house with rough sheds for stabling, and necessary seed; while each tenant on his part provided labor, machinery, and everything else. The crops were to be divided equally between tenant and owners. Mr. Close assured Englishmen that his first year's returns on wheat presented a strong contrast to those he got from the farms he owned in England; and he summed up the relative merits of different sections of the western country in these words: "Those who wish to go and raise wheat should go to Minnesota and Manitoba; those who prefer stock-raising, to the warmer countries south and where maize is grown, viz., Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas".



## V

### A PAMPHLET ON FARMING IN IOWA

William B. Close's marriage to Miss Mary Paullin in New York City took place about the same time that his letters were running in the English press.<sup>72</sup> The newly wedded couple went to England for their honeymoon. After their arrival Mr. Close for several months spent much time in conferences with his fellow countrymen on the subject of northwestern Iowa; and he was flooded with thousands of letters asking for further information. His own letters had opened the eyes of English landowners who could not squeeze more than three per cent out of their property.

At 38 Cornhill, London, and 90 King Street, Manchester, the recently organized firm of Close Brothers and Company set up offices where Mr. Close met or wrote to interested persons daily and encouraged emigration to the Iowa "colony".<sup>73</sup> To furnish full particulars he prepared a pamphlet on *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, of which several thousand copies were printed for distribution in January and February, 1880.

Prospective emigrants were informed as to the



best steamship and railroad lines with which the Close brothers had arranged special rates; and they were advised on how to render the voyage as easy and inexpensive as possible and how to fit themselves out so as to save much useless expense and trouble. The actual fare to Le Mars in such cases was represented to be under \$55 for travel by steerage and emigrant trains, under \$65 by intermediate, and from \$75 to \$95 by saloon and first-class trains — children under twelve going for half price and free under one. The cost of living and personal expenses of the twelve or fourteen days' journey from Liverpool to Le Mars generally came to \$15 or \$20 extra.

English emigrants were urged to allow for plenty of time at Le Mars in order that they might look about and thoroughly satisfy themselves that the country suited them before buying farms. Then, too, it would take some time to get all things in readiness for breaking and ploughing in April. Those who did not mind cold would lose nothing by going early and gaining experience; but those who were unable to go out before the breaking season opened could nevertheless buy land and have it improved through the Close firm, thus saving a whole year.<sup>74</sup>

As owners of cattle, sheep, and grain farms, the Closes had acquired considerable knowledge of the

new country, of the people, and of farming in general: this experience they now placed at the disposal of Englishmen who had some capital. The firm announced its intention to establish "a colony of English people of the better class, and thus combine Western farming with some English society": artisans or mechanics were not urged to emigrate unless they were able and willing to combine farming with their other occupations in what was a purely agricultural district; and laborers without means were not encouraged to emigrate unless they had friends in America to give them employment immediately on arrival, otherwise they would be worse off in the United States than in England.<sup>75</sup>

Thus the Close brothers made their strongest appeal to men with sufficient capital to be able to start good stock farms because stock farming was the thing for which northwestern Iowa was best adapted. They addressed themselves particularly to practical farmers who could emigrate and need lose no time in purchasing their farms and setting to work. To quote further from their pamphlet:

An inexperienced man should not invest his money at once, but should board and lodge on some farm for at least a year. The more a man brings the quicker and greater will be the returns. £500 will enable a man to buy and equip a farm of 160 acres for grow-

ing grain, but will leave scarcely any margin for the purchase of stock. To succeed, settlers, unless provided with ample means, must begin by roughing it somewhat and do all the work themselves, employing as little labour as possible, either out-door or in-door. We wish to impress upon them the fact that they must make up their minds to hard work, probably harder than they have ever done before, but at the same time work of which they will directly reap the full return. Women and children must also help to keep down expenses by doing the house work, and looking after the dairy, poultry, &c.

For a man who is used to good living in England, and to a sedentary life, unaccustomed to roughing it, and inexperienced in farming, we consider £1,000 is not too much to bring out. Our experience is that, however willing he may be to rough it and save expenses, it takes time for him to work as a labourer, and thus save as much as possible each year to re-invest. Indeed it is the capital invested in live-stock over and above the first £500 (which is tied up in lands, buildings, &c.) that enables a man rapidly to increase his capital.<sup>76</sup>

It is not clear whether the Closes had organized a partnership in England before they invested in Iowa lands; but a newspaper reporter who interviewed James B. Close is authority for the information that when the brothers made their first appearance in Le Mars in 1878 they "organized as a branch of the London house, making a daily exchange and brokerage business between England



and America".<sup>77</sup> Regardless of the date and manner of its origin, the new partnership very early took in Constantine W. Benson, another well-known Cambridge oarsman. The firm at once advertised its general purpose to promote the establishment of an English community among the American inhabitants of Plymouth County. Furthermore, the firm announced that it would transact a general land business: it would not sell the Close farms to settlers or investors, nor was it interested in selling the lands of any particular persons or companies. On the price of Iowa lands, the firm's statement was as follows:

The price of lands varies according to its quality and contiguity to railroads. We have lists of first class lands, within eight or ten miles of railway stations, that can yet be bought, cash down, for 15s. to £1 per statute acre in tracts of 80 to 160 acres, and suitable in all respects for stock or grain farms; but if two or three thousand acres are bought in the same purchase the price would not be more than 12s. to 14s. per acre, cash down. We generally buy lands from non-residents, and have travelled even as far as New York, 1,500 miles, to settle a bargain when we thought it was a good one. In this way we constantly hear of lands for sale 25 per cent cheaper than the lands offered us by the railroad companies, who can afford to hold their lands.<sup>78</sup>

The Close firm also acted as an agent for lend-



ing money at eight per cent on the security of first mortgages on improved farms, no loan exceeding twenty-five per cent of the value of a farm. In preference to investing capital in mortgages, however, the firm recommended investments in lands; for besides "getting a good yearly return, which depends as much on the crops as does the interest from loans, there is the profit from the rise in the value of the lands." Accordingly, the Closes undertook to act as agents for English investors who could not go out to Iowa: they offered not only to buy lands for such persons, but also to improve them, obtain tenants, and give them the same attention as their own farms. Owing to the fact that lands were rapidly being taken up and steadily rising in value due to renewed immigration, the firm asserted that "no combination of circumstances could make it a better time to invest", and prophesied that in a very few years the prices of lands in the superior agricultural region of the Missouri water-shed would nearly equal those in the older portions of the State.<sup>79</sup>

Another object of the Close firm was to serve prospective emigrants as agents and help them on arrival in Iowa. Those who wished to join the "Close Colony", as it came to be called, were offered the following advantages:

Should the inquirer place himself under the guid-

ance of our firm, he will be shown immediately on his arrival at Le Mars lists of the best and cheapest lands from which to select a desirable farm, thus avoiding the useless expense of hotels, and the waste of time and money occasioned by travelling about the country. We have also arranged with a number of farmers in our neighborhood, with any of whom a new-comer, by paying for board and lodging to the amount of twelve to fourteen shillings a week, could stay until he had made up his mind whether the country and mode of life would suit him or not. Or, if he should be totally inexperienced, we would help him to find a stock farm, where, if he makes himself sufficiently useful, he will be boarded and lodged in exchange for his work, and in time perhaps get wages; thus he could, before laying out his money, get a practical insight into farming, although for this he must make up his mind to a good deal of roughing it. Until sufficiently experienced he could always come to the firm for advice and guidance. Should the settler (in any of the above cases) decide on buying any of the lands he sees, we will help him to buy them at the lowest price, look to the title — a most important item, and one that requires considerable experience (it being a frequent practice throughout the United States and Canada to sell lands to settlers with bad titles) — and see that the deed is made out correctly, and properly recorded. Then, after the land is bought, we advise him as to the building of the house and the sheds; also show him how to superintend the “breaking,” or first ploughing of the land, which requires considerable care (bad “breaking” showing its effect

for several years afterwards); and generally look after the new-comer's interests until he is fully settled on his farm.<sup>80</sup>

The Close firm undertook to make the best bargains possible for all those who had dealings with it. Owing to the fact that raw young Englishmen found it difficult to deal "with the natives of a country where everything has its price", and owing to the further fact that "to buy land from an Iowa agent, or stock from a Minnesota farmer, and not get the worst of the bargain, requires a peculiarly level head, and a fool and his money are parted at least as easily as in the old country", the Closes worked out a system of coöperation to which they called particular attention: having dealt far more extensively in lands than anyone else in the country and being always advised when cheap land was on the market, the firm could buy land three to four shillings an acre cheaper than the local agents, and by buying land for several English purchasers 'at the same time, the firm could make still further savings.

The Closes could, moreover, obtain wholesale rates from large lumber firms who shipped direct, so that English settlers were enabled to effect a great saving on the cost of constructing houses and barns; and if the improvements on a large number of newly purchased farms were covered

in the same contract, the firm could build fully one-third cheaper than the local agents and carpenters. Finally, the Closes were in a position to obtain machinery, implements, stoves, furniture, and other articles from the manufacturers at wholesale prices.

For all these services in the immigrant's behalf, thus saving him a large sum in actual expenses besides preventing him from falling into the hands of unscrupulous agents, the Close firm charged a commission of \$250, or five per cent on the minimum sum of \$5000 which the firm required "those to have who wish to form part of the colony, which includes the commission on purchase of land up to 160 acres", and other items of expense enumerated above. If more than 160 acres were wanted by anyone, a further commission of five per cent was charged. The firm also required a deposit of \$125 before the emigrant left England, but if on arrival in Iowa he was dissatisfied with the country and left within one month without purchasing land, the deposit was returned — otherwise the settler was required to pay the balance when he purchased his farm.<sup>81</sup>

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Closes offered to take some pupils on their own stock farms "at a fixed premium" because it was "desirable for those who have sufficient capi-



tal to start a large stock farm to learn thoroughly how to lay out their money before they actually do so, and avoid many of the mistakes which new comers are apt to fall into."<sup>82</sup>

## VI

### IOWA MADE ATTRACTIVE TO ENGLISHMEN

To the small capitalist class of England, the Closes made Iowa as attractive as possible. They were careful to point out that but little over one-third of the State was under cultivation, although ninety-five per cent of its total area was tillable; that it had a healthful climate, a fertile soil, and an abundance of pure springs and running brooks; that it was the first State of the Union in the production of wheat and hogs, second in corn, third in barley, fifth in the number of milch cows, and second to none in dairying; and lastly that Iowa had no Indians or negroes, but a thoroughly settled and orderly people who never carried or wanted "fire-arms, revolvers, bowie-knives, and such play-things". The possible objection that Iowa was a frontier wilderness was answered in this wise:

Emigrants to Iowa must not imagine they are going beyond civilisation. They will find the habits and customs of the people in Iowa in a great measure similar to those in England, and will not be called upon to abandon their ordinary comforts and con-

veniences or to encounter the hardships and privations of a frontier life. Pioneering, the forerunner of permanent improvements, has gone beyond Iowa, and is now only to be found in Western Kansas, Nebraska, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, and other newer portions of the great continent of America. In Iowa are orchards and vineyards, planted years ago, and the whole country is well supplied with roads, bridges, mills, shops, stores, and hotels, as also with churches, colleges, and schools. And it is almost impossible to get more than twenty miles from a railroad.<sup>83</sup>

The physical geography of Iowa in general, a brief description of Plymouth, Woodbury, Cherokee, and Sioux counties, the weather and rainfall, and the extremely rich and easily cultivated soil were truthfully presented to prospective settlers. The silicious marl or bluff deposit of northwestern Iowa, declared to have originated as an accumulation of sediment in an ancient lake which was afterwards drained and closely resembling the loess deposit of the Rhine Valley, was alleged to be superior in quality to the black loam of the counties which drained toward the Mississippi. The soil of the Missouri slope was alleged to combine "perfect natural drainage with a surface accumulation of from two to six feet of decayed vegetable growth for manure."<sup>84</sup>

Englishmen who were interested in sheep raising were advised of the special advantages of the

cheap bluff lands overlooking the Missouri and the Big Sioux rivers, with hillsides "clothed with the most excellent grasses, even to the summits", resembling in general the celebrated "Downs" of England.<sup>85</sup> Here sheep could be raised at an inconsiderable cost.

Settlers in northwestern Iowa were assured of a good supply of wood and coal from Iowa fields. It was pointed out also that educational advantages were abundant, while the burden of local and State taxation was not heavy. There were assurances of excellent highways, "as the prairie makes admirable roads and the streams are easily bridged"; of "plenty of good doctors in the towns, and no want of doctors in the country, who combine farming with their profession, and who would be useful in an emergency and until more experienced aid was procured"; of a demand for good, industrious, and intelligent girls who "are looked upon more in the light of helps than servants"; of capital small game shooting—any quantity of prairie hens, snipe, woodcock, and American quail—and splendid wild duck and goose shooting in the autumn and spring, with a few deer; and of streams and lakes, especially near the Minnesota boundary, "full of an extraordinary number and variety of fish, of wall-eyed pike, cat-fish, and bass". Such were the colors which



were used to make the picture of northwestern Iowa attractive to Englishmen.<sup>86</sup> These accounts aroused the interest of many English farmers.

While the Closes gave Englishmen no flattering description of western farming methods, they did convey an idea of what good farming promised in the following terms:

Farming in the newer portions of the Western States is generally carried on in the roughest and rudest way, in spite of the fact that the best machinery is used for everything. Except among the very best class of farmers, no one thinks of utilising waste which is burnt on the prairie, or of manuring their lands; and when the manure heap gets so large as to be in the way, the stables or sheds are pulled down, and put up in a fresh place. There is not much science in Western farming, but good farming always pays; and an Englishman, who knows how to combine some of his old country farming with the best points of American farming, will easily double the average yield, and must turn out a successful man.<sup>87</sup>

Many prospectuses of agricultural schemes in foreign lands seem to have been circulating in England in the year 1880, each vaunting its own locality and offering a golden road to distressed British farmers, small capitalists, and cadets. This fact led one English writer to call it "a sort of beggar-my-neighbour game of fortune-making", and the wonder was how there could be so many

Paradises and how Englishmen had been left "so long in benighted ignorance of them."<sup>88</sup>

The Close brothers, however, did not hesitate to point out the drawbacks of the new country which they were promoting. They made it clear that every new settlement had its difficulties: wheat growing in Iowa had suffered from grasshoppers and sometimes from blight; and stock raising necessitated winter feeding, a fact which in their judgment was more than offset by "our entire immunity from droughts, the cheapness and abundance of grain and hay, our nearness to market, and the superior condition of grain-fed cattle to grass-fed on arrival at their destination after a long journey." Cold weather might also be considered a drawback; but even that was not minded, except for an occasional blizzard, because it was a dry cold, just as the extreme heat in summer was a dry heat and not oppressive. Furthermore, "the lack of society, which is inevitable to a new colony, and which the first ladies who went out have felt a little, is being rapidly obviated by the class and the number of the people going out"; and as for the want of trained servants, one of the best societies in Scotland for training young girls had offered to supply good families going to north-western Iowa.<sup>89</sup>

That the picture was not more alluring than the

facts warranted was adequately attested by Englishmen who had gone to Iowa and had already had sufficient time to make up their minds about the country. One gentleman who had lived in Iowa several years and spent many more in other parts of America and Canada wrote that he did not know of a single foreign settler who regretted coming to Iowa; nor was he acquainted with any part of America which presented such great advantages as did Iowa for stock raising and sheep farming.

After eight months' residence, Robert G. Maxtone Graham was thoroughly satisfied: he enjoyed the life in Iowa, and found himself in better health than when he was in England. W. H. Statter, W. Roylance Court, Jr., Henry Garnett, and H. Grey de Pledge declared that the Close description of northwestern Iowa was fully borne out by the facts, that the accounts were not a bit exaggerated or too puffed up, and that it was a grand country. Edward T. Wright, Philip Barnett, W. P. Bridson, the Hon. H. F. Sugden, and Arthur Gee had visited the region and were convinced of its advantages. During an extensive tour in the summer of 1878 Rudolph C. Lehmann of London passed through Plymouth County and obtained some very good first-hand information. To quote from a letter on his travels:

During the greater part of this tour we kept clear of hotels, and put up at night at the house of the nearest farmer: thus my opportunities of acquiring information were better than those of the ordinary traveller by railroad. Every farmer with whom I talked spoke in the most enthusiastic terms of the soil, the richness and inexhaustible fertility of which must seem remarkable to anyone accustomed only to English agriculture and necessary rotation of crops. To employ the expression of one farmer, "You scratch the ground with a toothpick, and reap two harvests a year."

R. P. Kay wrote to the Closes that it was with great regret that he had left Iowa — although he still had a farm there — because Mrs. Kay could not stay, adding: "It is, as you told me, rather rough for ladies."<sup>90</sup>



## VII

### ENGLISH SETTLERS WELCOMED AT LE MARS

Before the Closes had prepared their pamphlet for distribution and before William B. Close had left for England, forty or fifty gentlemen, some with their families, had arrived at Le Mars on Mr. Close's recommendation, and not one of them had expressed dissatisfaction with northwestern Iowa "from a farmer's point of view." This fact was given plenty of publicity in England.<sup>91</sup> A large number of these first newcomers seem to have settled southeast of Le Mars, but all received an enthusiastic welcome, at least so far as the local press was concerned. In the autumn of 1879 one editor made the following announcement:

Last Thursday another installment of English capitalists reached Le Mars, and they are already on the look-out for lands. It is estimated that by the 1st of January one hundred others will sail for America, with Northwestern Iowa as their destination. And we most heartily welcome them. Those already here are gentlemen of culture, of fine social attainments, and they enter so heartily into the work of improving and building up this region that they set in motion

others who have been given to croaking. By all means let the English and the French and the Germans and the Irish come to Northwestern Iowa and build homes for themselves and for others.<sup>92</sup>

And two weeks later the American inhabitants of Le Mars and vicinity were furnished with more glad tidings:

The Messrs. Close Brothers, Mr. Grahame, and the other English capitalists have decided to locate permanently in Le Mars, and will have their office in the basement of Dent's brick bank building, on Sixth Street. That this determination is a wise one for the gentlemen named we have no doubt, and Le Mars will be glad to have them remain with us. These gentlemen are improving vast quantities of land in this and adjacent counties; but what they have already done is only a small matter to what they will do in the future. They are giving employment to many worthy men; making it an easy matter for poor men to secure good farms, encouraging emigration hitherward, and are in fact busy all the time doing something that advances the prosperity of Northwest Iowa. We repeat, we are gratified to have them locate in Le Mars.<sup>93</sup>

From time to time during the next few years, the Le Mars newspapers recorded the arrival of English people in "rafts" or "detachments of yeomanry", or else told of their being on the way. Thus, in December, 1879, twenty gentlemen with their families were reported to have set sail from

England; in March, 1880, seventy more English friends of the Closes were expected to reach Le Mars in a few weeks; and in April, 1880, scores of newcomers from the wealthy class of Manchester had arrived.<sup>94</sup> In order to cope with the invasion, and especially to cater to the peculiar wants of their fellow countrymen, Close Brothers and Company bought the Commercial Hotel and renamed it "Albion House".<sup>95</sup>

Although the Close project early received a welcome from Le Mars editors, some criticism was voiced at St. Paul because the firm encouraged only the immigration of the educated Englishman who commanded at least \$2500 and preferably more to start with. A Le Mars newspaper answered by calling this attack "a pusillanimous spirit of men whose souls are too small to see others prosper". About one year later when corn huskers were sorely needed, a correspondent suggested the remedy: "If the Close Brothers were to use as much influence toward obtaining some of the laboring class from the manufacturing districts of England, or from some of the suffering counties of Ireland, they would bestow a greater blessing on the northwest than they do by bringing over capitalists, for capital can live anywhere", but labor was something the Northwest and especially Plymouth County could not do without.<sup>96</sup>

That the new life which had been instilled into the settlement of the region by the energy and enterprise of these representatives of English capital was appreciated is sufficiently attested by observers of the time. A correspondent of an eastern agricultural journal, for instance, concluded his lengthy article on what the Close brothers were doing for Plymouth, Sioux, Lyon, and Osceola counties in the following words:

Many Englishmen are settling in Northwestern Iowa through this agency, purchasing and improving homesteads, in size and manner according to their tastes and means. We did not meet these gentlemen during our stay in these counties, but were informed by those who know, that they had been the means of bringing over \$600,000 of money into this part of the state within the past two years, and were developing large stock farms, as individual investments, in Plymouth and Woodbury counties. Their average price is \$6 per acre. Taxes are doubtless higher here than in the East, literally stated, but in fact they are much lower, when you estimate the difference in valuations — upon which, of course, the taxes are levied.<sup>97</sup>

The Close brothers also found personal admirers in the little city which had thus far been the center of the district on which they had expended their wealth to make it "blossom as the rose". To quote from a writer in the local press:

The achievements of these gentlemen during the



past two years in the way of improving and developing the country, stands without a parallel in the history of western civilization; and while the scope of their operations extends over several counties of Northwestern Iowa, the southern portion of Minnesota and Dakota, Lemars and Plymouth county have been so far, the greatest beneficiaries from the enterprise which they represent . . . . The business of the two firms<sup>98</sup> embraces the investment of English capital in lands, and the improvement of the same; that is transforming the broad prairies of the peerless northwest into improved farms. They have expended hundreds of thousands of dollars, and have hundreds of thousands more to be applied in the same direction. In order that the reader may gain a more comprehensive idea of the magnitude of their operations we submit a brief statement of last year's achievements in Plymouth, Woodbury, Sioux, Lyon and Osceola counties mostly in the three first named. . . .

Time and space forbid more lengthy reference to an enterprise that has done so much for town and country but we should have failed to perform our whole duty, if we were to leave the subject before us without according in behalf of Lemars and Plymouth county a meed of praise for the untiring energy displayed by the above firm in the interest of both city and country. Their business operations have contributed vastly to the prosperity of Northwestern Iowa, and in the future as in the past, Lemars should delight to do honor to an agency that has done so much to make the young city what it is — one of the most flourishing and prosperous in the State.<sup>99</sup>

## VIII

### FORMATION OF THE IOWA LAND COMPANY

At all times confident of the wonderful future in store for the counties of northwestern Iowa, the Close brothers lost no reasonable opportunity to acquire as much land as possible. In March, 1880, they were reported as owning 30,000 acres; and one month later they bought 9900 acres, the east half of Union Township in Plymouth County.<sup>100</sup> So many and extensive were their purchases as subsequently announced in the press, that it would be difficult to compute how much land they acquired title to: only their books could reveal the exact figures, but these no longer exist.<sup>101</sup>

James B. Close was reported to have "seen fit to keep the operations and inside workings of the firm private until such time as they could get everything in order and in a working condition"; and so, it was not until interviewed by a Dubuque newspaperman in September, 1881, that he gave the first account of the firm's immense capacity for doing business. In the autumn of 1878 they bought 30,000 acres of wild land in Woodbury and

Plymouth counties. In the spring of 1879 they became agents for London and other English capital in gradually increasing sums. During the year 1880 the firm bought land in Worth and Taylor counties and in northwestern Iowa the following amounts: at one time 18,280, at another 40,000, at still another 25,000, and later 14,000 acres more.<sup>102</sup>

What relations the Closes had with the land department of the Illinois Central Railroad can not be stated with certainty, but in the summer of 1880 it appears that E. F. Drake, land commissioner of the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad, invited them to St. Paul for a conference and entertained them and C. W. Benson at his own home for several days. This visit led to a very important contract whereby the original plans of the English firm were "enlarged to a scale of importance more fruitful in its results than any colonization scheme hitherto inaugurated in the northwest."<sup>103</sup> Eventually, as will be shown later, the Closes extended their holdings into counties along the Iowa-Minnesota border.

During the whole course of their operations, with a single exception, the Close firm took no steps to plan or promote towns. In the autumn of 1880 they platted near their farm in the southeastern part of Plymouth County the village of

Quorn, because they expected the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad to come that way. Due to some misunderstanding, or because, as a local historian wrote later, "the company, not liking the Johnny Bull methods of inducing railways to their embryo towns, finally platted Kingsley, one mile to the east", and so the fair hopes of the village of Quorn and its projectors were forever blasted.<sup>104</sup>

In January, 1881, the Closes are said to have bought from Bloomington (Illinois) speculators 19,000 acres near Larchwood in Lyon County for about \$90,000, and soon after they announced their intention to open an office at Rock Rapids in that county.<sup>105</sup> In a letter written about this time, William B. Close asserted that for the past two years Woodbury, Plymouth, and Sioux counties had been the center of their operations and that the influx of Englishmen and well-to-do settlers had exhausted the cheap land and permanently raised values in that region — hence their reason for spreading out toward the Minnesota boundary.<sup>106</sup> At the same time they were appointed sole agents for the sale of the lands of the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad in Sioux, Lyon, and Woodbury counties<sup>107</sup> — indeed, they are reported as having bought all the unsold lands of that company.



The firm of Close Brothers and Company, which in 1880 kept an office at 38 Cornhill, London, changed its name to Close, Benson and Company — C. W. Benson having become a partner in the business. In 1881 the firm offered tenants on their farms the privilege of purchase after fifteen months' development.<sup>108</sup> Otherwise they went right on constantly adding to their possessions. Besides maintaining an office at Le Mars, they set up another at Rock Rapids and one at Sibley in May, 1881 — James B. Close taking charge of the latter.

By this time the real estate interests of the company in northwestern Iowa and southern Minnesota had become so immense and questions of titles, transfers, leases, and sales so delicate that they engaged Major J. C. Ball to devote his entire time and attention to their affairs. Having served as manager of most of the legal business of the Close brothers at Le Mars for the past two years, Mr. Ball, with an assistant, located at Sibley in order to apply himself to the intricacies of the land situation in that region. As a "side line" to their expanding business, the firm had already purchased a complete abstract of land titles in Plymouth County.<sup>109</sup> So extensive were their purchases and sales for one week in May, 1881, that, allowing for possible newspaper exaggeration, it was estimated at nearly 100,000 acres.<sup>110</sup>

In the month of January, 1881, Close, Benson and Company of London sent word to the land commissioner of the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad that the Duke of Sutherland, Lord Stafford, and certain British railway magnates were making plans to visit the Middle West. Correspondence began and the manager of the tour was interceded with and so urgently invited to visit the Close colony that he finally promised to journey from Omaha to Chicago by way of St. Paul. Late in May the duke with his retinue passed through Le Mars without leaving the train; but at Sibley, the new county seat of Osceola County, the ducal party was met at the station by William B. Close and conducted on a sightseeing tour of the neighboring prairie for two hours:<sup>111</sup> one of the farms was inspected with great interest by the duke and his agricultural friends, "as the plow was then turning soil that had never yet been touched by the hand of man."<sup>112</sup>

The reason for this visit of English capitalists is easily explained: the Iowa Land Company, Limited, had been formed in London to undertake the land and colonization business on a very extensive scale under the tenantry system on the lands adjacent to the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad; and a large sum of money, variously estimated at from \$1,125,000 to \$2,500,000 had been

subscribed for stock, of which nearly one-half was taken by members of the ducal party.<sup>113</sup> The Close brothers were made managers of this corporation which they seem to have been instrumental in forming. According to one source of information, before the title to a vast quantity of land had passed, the breaking teams of contractors were set to work in the neighborhood of Sibley; twenty-six square miles of virgin soil were turned over; and lumber was selected for 160 houses to be erected and ready for tenants in the spring of 1882.

The Duke of Sutherland, one of the wealthiest peers of England, was reported also as having bought from sixty to seventy thousand acres in Rock and Nobles counties in Minnesota.<sup>114</sup> Over sixty square miles of land in Osceola County were selected for the company; but inasmuch as the title of the Sioux City and St. Paul Railroad was being disputed<sup>115</sup> by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, and the attorneys of all the parties interested could not agree on the subject, a check for \$160,653 was paid to the First National Bank of St. Paul as trustee pending the final settlement of the question of title. Sibley became the company's headquarters. Thus, it is said, with an office in London and offices in the chief cities of the United Kingdom, with a desk in the Sioux City land offices, represented by C. W. Slayton, the Iowa Land



Company listed on the stock exchange in London commanded enormous moneyed resources. . . A St. Paul newspaper could not withhold its congratulations in the following terms:

The St. Paul chamber of commerce delegation, who extended so warm a welcome to the Duke of Sutherland and party, may take credit for their part; the St. Paul and Omaha road, who gave a special train for the party, may take credit for its part; the land commissioner of the Sioux City road who wears the duke's scarf pin as a trophy may take credit for his part, and good people of St. Paul may felicitate themselves and be thankful for the enterprise, which induced this heap of British gold to a transfer from the bank coffers of London, and which will be followed by sturdy English brain and muscle to develop a very important artery of St. Paul's commerce and to further insure a future which the sanguine can scarcely conceive.<sup>116</sup>

The Close brothers had the task of purchasing and looking after lands for the Iowa Land Company. From this time on their operations were practically inseparable from those of their principal, although they retained their holdings in Crawford, Plymouth, and other counties. It was anticipated that they would break 40,000 acres of wild land in 1881; and with 150,000 acres under their charge, they rivalled the gigantic farming operations of the famed Oliver Dalrymple.<sup>117</sup> Soon



they were buying land near Canton, South Dakota.<sup>118</sup> About the middle of July the Iowa Land Company was reported as owning 100,000 acres in southwestern Minnesota and northwestern Iowa.<sup>119</sup> farms to the number of 120 with good dwelling-houses and barns were opened to be sold or rented on favorable terms, the managers intending to secure tenants or purchasers in Illinois and Wisconsin, if the farms were not disposed of before winter. This unexpected "boom" met with a hearty reception from the Yankee pioneers of Sibley:

The land broken this season will be back-set next fall, and thus made ready for seeding in the spring. The purpose is to put up hay on all the farms opened, so that those who rent and take possession of them during the winter will have feed for horses and cattle. Those who have had dealings with Close Bros., in the way of contracts for breaking, find them to be honorable gentlemen and always ready to do what is right. And as James B. Close will have charge of the business of the Iowa Land Company, the relations of our people with it will be pleasant. Osceola county is fortunate in the establishment of this company here, as its farming operations will make Sibley as live a town as there is in Iowa, and greatly hasten the development of the magnificent resources of the surrounding country.<sup>120</sup>

Owing to their mammoth operations in land

both for themselves and for the Iowa Land Company, the Closes were declared to have done "more to help the prosperity and growth of the great west than any of our American people, and they are deserving of success."<sup>121</sup> A Sioux City newspaper editorial on "Our British Tax-Payers" declared:

Some idea of the magnitude of the English interests in Northwestern Iowa may be inferred from the taxes paid by Close Bros. & Co., for themselves and the investors represented by the firm, in this county, \$1,400; Plymouth county, \$4,000; Sioux county, \$1,600; Lyon county, \$5,000; and in Osceola county \$1,500. In the latter county there is beside this \$10,000 taxes paid by the Iowa Land Company, Limited, of which the Duke of Sutherland is the heavy man. These figures have nothing to do with the amounts paid by individual resident owners of English birth of whom there are several hundred in this county and the two next north. As these taxes average only a little more than ten cents per acre, the extent of the English land interests may be reckoned.<sup>122</sup>

Minnesota people were also beginning to cast longing eyes south across the boundary toward these Englishmen busily improving Iowa, and from general indications expected an expansion into Nobles County.<sup>123</sup> Still farther away, wide-awake promoters of the Red River Valley of the North tendered the Closes special transportation

to come and see "what real productive land is" and after seeing to "abandon the hog and hominy plains of Iowa for the wheat fields of Dakota."<sup>124</sup>

Soon the expectations of Minnesota pioneers were rewarded when they learned that all the railroad lands in Nobles County had been sold and that the Close brothers intended to open an office in Worthington and begin the development of their holdings.<sup>125</sup> At the same time much remained to be done in Iowa. At Sibley they built a large brick block 128 by 80 feet.<sup>126</sup> In the spring of 1882 C. W. Benson, one of the partners, while on a visit to St. Paul, announced the plans of English capitalists for the construction of the Spirit Lake and Western Railroad. The Iowa Land Company, then reputed to be the largest foreign company doing business in the United States with a capitalization of \$5,500,000 and stock selling on the London exchange at a premium of twenty-five per cent, was projecting the route through its Osceola and Lyon county tracts to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, while some of the railroad companies were talking and doing nothing. Grade stakes were set and arrangements made in London for the rails.<sup>127</sup>

## IX

### PROHIBITION AND ENGLISH IMMIGRATION

During the early years the English settlers at Le Mars and vicinity were greatly agitated by the proposal to amend the Constitution so as to drive out of the State the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquor. The General Assembly in 1880 threw a considerable scare into the first newcomers from England by its resolution in favor of the prohibitory amendment. In accordance with the requirement of the State Constitution similar action was taken at the next regular session of the General Assembly in 1882; at the same time provision was made giving the voters an opportunity to declare for or against the proposal at a special election in June. A favorite argument of the "Antis" was that the adoption of prohibition would prevent immigration to Iowa and thus retard the development of the State.

The result of the popular referendum on the subject on June 27, 1882, showed that the amendment lost in Plymouth County (English settlers not voting because they were still aliens) but car-



ried the State by a good majority — thus assuring the disappearance of saloons in Iowa. Immediately the question arose as to what effect this step was likely to have on the business of Close brothers. When interviewed by a newspaper reporter, Fred B. Close is alleged to have stated that the firm would probably leave the State. Afterwards Mr. Close declared that the reporter used stronger language than the interview warranted. He said that since a large portion of the firm's business was done with Englishmen fresh from England, the amendment would likely deter many from coming to Le Mars; and that if this fact caused their business to fall off materially, the Close brothers might go somewhere else. But he did not think it at all likely that this would happen.<sup>128</sup> What really occurred in consequence of the incident may well be told in the words of a Le Mars editor:

Some anonymous penny-a-liner wrote to the Pioneer-Press what purported to be an interview with Fred B. Close of Lemars, in which the Close Bros. were represented as intending to pull out of Iowa, because of the adoption of the amendment prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicants; and a lot of very callow newspaper scribblers are making conspicuous donkeys of themselves by repeating with emendations, the alleged interview. The usually discreet Carroll Herald flies off at a tangent and propounds a lot of

very ridiculous questions affecting the business integrity of the firm, and demanding from the Sioux City Journal, categorical answer. The Journal has not answered, not because it cannot, but probably because it deems the questions unworthy of notice, which is true, but the queries are in print, and very widely circulated, must receive attention. The complete reply to its interrogatories is that the Close Bros. have the entire confidence of the English Colony, which would not be the case had they acted other than honorably with their clients. . . . Their purpose of abandoning the state on account of the amendment or for any other reason, may be easily inferred from the fact that they continue making investments just as if there had been no election on June 27th. The Close Bros. are business men and not *doctrinaires*. They are cosmopolitan in their ideas, and accommodate themselves readily to surrounding conditions. They have invested hundreds of thousands, are still investing and are ready to invest more if they can see their way to getting returns for their outlay. That is all there is to it. They have their views on all public questions, but no men in Iowa, having the interests at stake they have, are more reticent or more modest in expressing them. It is about time the foolish gabble regarding them is stopped, for the nonsensical stuff is doing northwestern Iowa more harm than it is doing them.<sup>129</sup>

In this connection it is well to add that as early as January and February, 1880, before prohibition was assured as a definite State policy, the Close brothers were aware that one trait of their

countrymen in America was their liking for alcoholic beverages: so marked a drawback to the happiness and success of English settlers in north-western Iowa caused the Close brothers to emphasize their caution in no uncertain terms:

Unless a man will keep from that vice he had better stay in England, where he can get the drink he is used to, for a drunkard will no more succeed in Iowa than in England. We are sorry to have to state that in this respect English settlers have acquired a bad name, and are too frequently left behind by the more sober and steady though less intelligent German.<sup>130</sup>

Needless to say, the business of the Close brothers was not seriously interfered with by the adoption of prohibition in Iowa. The new amendment to the Constitution, while in force, was not always well enforced; and about one year later it was declared void by the Iowa Supreme Court on the ground of unconstitutionality.<sup>131</sup>

## X

### LATER HISTORY OF THE CLOSE BROTHERS

It is not necessary here to trace the expansion of the Iowa Land Company into Minnesota. The Closes were advertising 500,000 acres for sale in the summer of 1882. At the new town of Ireton in Sioux County they erected an elegant brick block.<sup>132</sup> In the summer of the following year the firm bought from the St. Paul and Sioux City the town site of Bigelow, Minnesota, and from the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul 100,000 acres in Pipestone County farther north.<sup>133</sup>

In 1883 they still advertised 500,000 acres for sale in Plymouth, Woodbury, Lyon, and Osceola counties in Iowa, and Nobles, Murray, and Rock counties in Minnesota.<sup>134</sup> Indeed, the Close brothers brought the hum of industry to southwestern Minnesota by giving contracts for the building of farm houses before the snows of winter came in 1883 and even built a hotel at Pipestone.<sup>135</sup> What they had done for Le Mars and Sibley where they still maintained offices, Pipestone also expected. In the autumn the Closes are said to have shipped



a wagon load of advertising matter to different parts of Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin to induce immigrants to the region which they were promoting.<sup>136</sup>

In the month of February, 1884, the Close brothers gave up the management of the Iowa Land Company and the partnership known as Close, Benson and Company dissolved, C. W. Benson leaving it to take over the management of the Iowa Land Company. The three Closes then formed the new firm of Close Brothers and Company; but Fred, who had charge of the business at Pipestone, withdrew in 1884 and became a resident of Sioux City.<sup>137</sup> For some months, in order to care for their farms and the lands of English investors still in their hands, James and William Close maintained offices at Le Mars, Sibley, and Pipestone; but early in 1885, to compete on more even terms with railroad and other land companies, the firm incorporated, set up at Chicago, where they have remained to this day, although the Closes have not kept up their connection with it all these years.<sup>138</sup> How long they kept offices in Iowa or continued to own or manage farms in Plymouth, Woodbury, Sioux, Osceola, and Lyon counties it is impossible to state.<sup>139</sup>

As the country settled up, the Closes gradually disposed of their holdings to tenants, chiefly Amer-

icans, whom they had started on the road to prosperity. As for the Iowa Land Company, it was reported as doing business in Osceola County several years later, with Cecil F. Benson and K. D. Dunlop as active partners.<sup>140</sup> What this corporation did in that county may be told in the words of local historians:

While the Iowa Land Company operated here it was quite a rendezvous for young Englishmen who had nothing to do but spend an allowance. They gave Sibley the appearance of being a lively town. Horse racing, polo playing, fox hunting and toboggan sliding were the usual sports for pastime. The company sent agents east to look up tenants and a vast number, good, bad and indifferent, were brought in by their enterprising agents. During those years, Sibley seemed to have a boom, but as a lot of the floating class of tenants moved on, the merchants found that they were losing more from poor accounts than they had ever lost before. It was probably the hardest time the Sibley merchants ever experienced. The managers of this company were fine gentlemen and free buyers, as well as prompt paymasters, but many of their tenants were a damage to the town. Finally the Iowa Land Company closed out its interests here and moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, where it is still doing business.<sup>141</sup>

How much land Englishmen owned in Iowa and Minnesota in the spring of 1884, which date may be regarded as marking the zenith of their opera-

tions in the region, was estimated by a St. Paul newspaper as follows:

Along the lines of the St. Paul & Sioux City and Sioux City & St. Paul, now the western division of the Omaha, foreign owners are more plentiful; and easily first in magnitude are the Close Brothers, formerly of Le Mars, Iowa, but lately removed to Pipestone City, Minnesota. It is scarcely correct to call these gentlemen aliens, as they live in the United States, and are thoroughly identified with American interests. Their possessions foot 270,000 acres, of which 150,000 are Milwaukee & St. Paul in Pipestone county, Minn.; 30,000 from the same company in Osceola and Dickinson counties, Iowa; 50,000 from the Sioux City road in Rock and Nobles counties, Minn. and 40,000 from the same road in Osceola, Sioux and Lyon counties, Iowa. The gentlemen have many thousands of acres under cultivation; have built towns, roads — rail and wagon — and brought to this country thousands of Britons. The following table shows the total of alien ownership, those owning more than 5000 acres being designated separately:<sup>142</sup>

	Acres
CLOSE BROTHERS, ENGLAND . . . . .	270,000
SYKES & HUGHES, ENGLAND . . . . .	85,000
MARQUIS DE MORES, FRANCE . . . . .	16,000
FINLAY DUN ET AL, ENGLAND . . . . .	25,000
C. M BEACH, LONDON . . . . .	10,000
WILLIAM JOHNSTON, LIVERPOOL . . . . .	7,000
EDWARD PAUL, LIVERPOOL . . . . .	6,000
OTHER OWNERS (LESS THAN 5,000 ACRES EACH)	40,380
GRAND TOTAL . . . . .	459,380



That the accumulation by foreigners of vast quantities of American land had begun to agitate the citizens of the country, especially the Anglo-phobes, is clear from the fact that bills were introduced in Congress in 1884 to restrict or prevent the acquisition of public lands by these "leviathan squatters". Two members of Congress addressed their colleagues on the subject and expressed their alarm at the condition of things by pointing out in almost identical terms that these foreigners had bought up nearly 21,000,000 acres of land within the past few years.<sup>143</sup> There seems, however, to have been little opposition to the English land holders in Iowa.

Congressmen were asked if they did not tremble for the future when they saw that subjects of the British Empire in only thirty-two different tracts owned an area equal to one-fourth the size of the British Isles. Nothing, however, was done at this time to check the absorption of vast quantities of land by foreigners or interfere with the growth of large landed estates; nor did Congress take steps to aid the horde of settlers who alleged they had crowded to the frontier only to find themselves pitted in a desperate struggle against corporate greed and combined foreign capital.

It may also be recorded in this connection that the Closes formed the first Kansas Land Company and bought about 100,000 acres in Trego County,



Kansas. In a letter from London, dated November 30, 1921, William B. Close writes:

There had been rain for three years before we bought these lands, and we sold most of them off at double the price within a year; but unfortunately a period of drought set in and the lands, being sold on time, reverted to our Company. We also bought another 100,000 acres on the Atchison Road in Kansas, near Colorado, and another 100,000 of beautiful land in the Panhandle of Texas. But unfortunately a period of drought set in, coinciding with the period of financial depression in the United States, and for a number of years there was no demand for these lands, and heavy taxes were paid each year, so that when a demand began to spring up, our friends here urged us to sell, get what money we could back out of the investment, and stop paying taxes. Had these lands been held for a year longer when the secrets of dry farming were being discovered, there would have been a large fortune waiting for the investment instead of which we did not get the whole of our money back.

At Chicago it appears that Close Brothers and Company developed a large and very successful farm loan business, borrowing money in England at from four to five per cent in those days and realizing from six and one-half to seven per cent net on their loans in this country. They had other enterprises as well, including an irrigation project at Lamar, Colorado, and the building of the

White Pass and Yukon Railway in Alaska, which they financed from London.

A brief biographical statement about the four brothers who did so much to promote the settlement and up-building of northwestern Iowa will not be out of place here. The tragic end of Frederick Brooks Close occurred on the polo grounds at Sioux City, in June, 1890. James Brooks Close died on July 31, 1910. John Brooks Close, who never entered the firm but supplied it with capital, died on March 20, 1914. William Brooks Close, the sole survivor of the original partnership, was still enjoying good health, except for the effects of an operation and influenza from which he was recovering in a London hospital, when he wrote on November 30, 1921.

## XI

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO AGRICULTURE

Despite their enthusiasm over the wonderful promise of the section of the State which they were promoting, the Close brothers did not imagine or prophesy that forty years later Plymouth and Sioux counties together would lead Iowa, the garden spot of the Mississippi Valley, in the value of land, farm buildings, machinery, and live stock; stand first in the value and production of farm crops; and tower high in agriculture as perhaps the richest of the counties of the whole United States.<sup>144</sup>

The Closes made no mistake when in 1880 they advertised the fertility of the soil in this region. They were convinced that grasshoppers alone had discouraged agricultural industry in the decade just past; and they invested in the prairie lands of these newer counties on the chance that the scourge was at an end. Time proved that in the face of the risks which they had assumed they and their friends were wise in trying their hand at agriculture and animal husbandry in the counties of northwestern Iowa.

In Garfield Township, Plymouth County, near the present town of Kingsley, the Closes anticipated the coming of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad and ventured to buy their first large tract in the autumn of 1878, the same year in which they had begun operations in Crawford County. The following spring saw much of the prairie sod broken for cultivation, some thirty odd houses built on as many one hundred and sixty acre farms, and tenants procured for most of them.<sup>145</sup> Early in 1881 a New Jersey editor who had met the brothers at Sioux City informed his readers that the Closes owned 28,000 acres in the county, of which they had more than 11,000 under the plow; besides they had made an actual outlay of \$100,000, having built 150 houses at an average cost of \$350 each, and expected to break 15,000 acres during the year and obtain one hundred renters on favorable terms. The editor's conclusion that these young 'Englishmen showed "considerable enterprise" and a great amount of "cheek" was capitalized at Le Mars in the following retort:

Jes' so, jes' so. And since the Jarsey scribe met them in Sioux City, the Close Bros., have been cheeky enough to purchase 20,000 acres more in Lyon county, some forty miles north of here. They have had the cheek to advertise for teams to break an additional 18,000 acres to that spoken of above. They had the cheek to give a contract the other day to one of our builders for the erection of 75 more dwelling houses,



and have actually the cheek to invite the struggling and sturdy young farmers of New Jersey (they have no prejudice you see against foreigners) to purchase those farms thus improved, or rent them on most favorable terms. They have the cheek to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in actual improvements, and *the cheek* to believe the investment a good one. Yes, they have "a great amount of cheek."<sup>146</sup>

How many houses and outbuildings the Closes had constructed on their own farms and others throughout northwestern Iowa it is impossible even to estimate. For a number of years S. B. Sawyer, Wm. McKay, and George Warner, builders and contractors, seem to have been busy following the pace set by the Close brothers in their purchase of lands. Whenever new farms were laid out, these artisans made bids and received contracts to put up the necessary buildings in Plymouth, Woodbury, Sioux, Lyon, and Osceola counties. In June, 1881, upwards of two hundred houses of uniform size and style and as many barns were reported in course of construction, ninety alone being under way in Osceola and Lyon counties to be completed for occupancy in the autumn or spring. Although the first dwellings were plastered, some of the later ones were ceiled with matched lumber and after January, 1882, their dimensions were enlarged.

The Close brothers are credited with having made the first and greatest improvement in Osceola County when in January, 1882, they had completed about one hundred houses in Viola, Wilson, Holman, Gilman, and Goewey townships.<sup>147</sup> This number was only a starter and was subsequently very much increased. In Lyon County, where they managed over 20,000 acres, one-half of which was broken and seeded in the spring of 1881, the Closes built over 100 houses with barns, and during this year they are said to have spent \$100,000 with Lyon County merchants, carpenters, blacksmiths, and common laborers.<sup>148</sup> In Sioux County they managed over 46,000 acres, an area equivalent to two whole townships, of which probably 7000 acres were brought under cultivation in 1881 and divided into about sixty farms.<sup>149</sup>

Some idea of the firm's activity as the creator of homesteads may be gathered from a list of its accomplishments in five counties in the year 1881: there were 25,777 acres broken up, 14,318 acres cultivated, 24,211 acres purchased, 319 houses built, 318 barns, 142 granaries, 122 corncribs, and 70 wells dug. Later years witnessed a greatly increased showing in the same direction: a house, barn, cribs, and other improvements arose on every quarter of a section controlled by the Close brothers.<sup>150</sup>

Besides carpenters, masons, and plasterers, laborers with teams and plows had no dearth of work for several spring seasons: breaking the virgin prairie or shallow plowing of the tough sod became their principal occupation for many years to come. In 1881, a typical year, contracts were let for 12,000 acres in Plymouth County at \$2.25 per acre and 30,000 acres in Lyon, Sioux, and Osceola counties<sup>151</sup> — at the end of the year about 26,000 acres having been actually broken up. Not only professional “breakers” but also tenants were engaged for this important work.

In April, 1881, the Close brothers wanted 180 farmers as tenants on unbroken farms. After breaking the sod at the usual rate of \$2.25 per acre and sowing it to flax, the seed being supplied free by the firm and half of the threshing bill paid later, the settler divided his first year’s crop on equal shares with the Closes. In this way settlers ran no risk, were assured of wages and free house rent, and had a chance to look around and choose good permanent locations for future farming operations.<sup>152</sup> Furthermore, when the flax was harvested, the firm paid a good price for “back setting”, that is, plowing deeply the flax stubble or rotted broken prairie sod in preparation for the next year’s planting of corn and wheat, cereals not nearly so exhausting to the soil as flax.



Another characteristic feature of the opening of a new country was tree planting on the farms. George H. Wright, called the horti-agriculturist of Sioux City, at various times obtained contracts to set out thousands of trees upon the Close and other lands throughout northwestern Iowa: early in 1881 alone he was engaged to plant 325 acres of trees, and a little later 400 acres more. His first work consisted of planting principally in the southeastern part of Plymouth County and the northeastern corner of Woodbury County. The trees planted were mostly cottonwood and elm, with a liberal sprinkling of ash, box-elder, and maple. The same nursery man closed a contract to plant one thousand acres of trees in the spring of 1882.<sup>153</sup>

Various reasons may be ascribed for this kind of activity. The whole region was treeless prairie except for a little timber along the streams. Groves were, therefore, planted early, several acres on every farm, to supply not only the fuel demands of the inhabitants as soon as possible but also for shade and for protection as windbreaks in winter for man and beast. So rapid was the growth of the softwood varieties that a few years sufficed to effect the objects desired. Moreover, the State legislature had stimulated the culture of forest trees by farmers by the passage of a law



providing that for every acre planted to trees \$100 be deducted from the taxable value of the farm for ten years from the time of planting, thus helping to reduce taxes.<sup>154</sup>

Through their untiring energy and perseverance the Close brothers succeeded in attracting not only a large number of their countrymen to locate on farms of their own but also hundreds of tenants to work on the farms belonging to their firm and to the Iowa Land Company of London. In the years 1880 and 1881 the Close farms could have been let twice over, a fact to which a Le Mars editor alluded as "landlordism on business principles — landlordism active, enterprising and trotting about."<sup>155</sup> By judicious advertising the Closes found it easy to procure renters, as may be guessed from the following newspaper story:

These improved farms will be rented to enterprising and thrifty farmers, either for cash rent, or a share of the crop. When desired seed will be furnished, and in some cases cows and stock, and the renter given an opportunity to pay for the same in breaking or other work, at a good price for his labor. Each farm or quarter section is provided with a well-built house and all necessary farm buildings, and all that is required by the renter is farming implements sufficient to plant and harvest his crops. These farms, scattered throughout the several counties above alluded to, comprise some of the most desirable

farming lands on the American continent or in the world. The country is well watered and adapted to the growth of corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye, flax and in fact all the cereal crops known to the temperate zone. For grazing and dairying purposes the country is unparalleled, which features will, in the near future, assume an important place in the agricultural achievements of the country. The lands are all within easy reach of railroads and markets; good schools abound, and every advantage in fact is vouchsafed to the settler that are afforded in the older settled states of the Union. Situated in a climate proverbially healthy, free from all malarial taint, and in a latitude free from the severe rigors of winter and the melting rays of the summer sun, it is a "land of promise" to the poor, and to the rich an investment that will return ten fold.<sup>156</sup>

Not counting the farms already occupied, the Closes had one hundred to let early in 1881. Of the 319 farms opened in 1881 only about thirty remained unoccupied in February, 1882, and these were soon disposed of.<sup>157</sup> The tenants were chiefly Americans, although some Hollanders took advantage of the opportunity to devote themselves to agriculture. Indeed, a considerable Dutch colony had been established in Sioux County, the firm of Richardson and Hospers at Le Mars having busily directed the tide of Dutch immigration to Sioux and Plymouth counties for several years.<sup>158</sup> These people came with little of the

world's goods; they familiarized themselves with the country, crops, markets, and prices; and eventually many of them bought farms from the Closes.

So numerous were the holdings controlled by the Closes that stewards were appointed to superintend about forty farms each.<sup>159</sup> Thus, John Hopkinson received an appointment to look after the farms in Lyon and Osceola counties. At harvest and threshing time especially, the steward's vigilance in the interest of his employers was very much needed. Sometimes the Close brothers, in order to protect themselves as well as their tenants, procured extra labor — as shown by their advertisement in the autumn of 1883 for three hundred additional hands to help harvest and care for crops on Sioux County farms.<sup>160</sup>

## XII

### IMMIGRANT FARMERS IN THE ENGLISH COLONY

There can be no question but that the immigration of Englishmen to the counties so frequently named in these pages gave business and agriculture a new impetus in northwestern Iowa. The system whereby the Close brothers coöperated with their tenants and the English settlers, after a little over two years of experimentation, proved remunerative to all concerned, if one may believe the testimony of the St. Paul press in 1881:

Probably the safest, and consequently on the average, the most remunerative kind of agricultural life is a combination of all, or what is called mixed farming. In this, stock raising, wheat culture, and the production of other grains are carried on, either simultaneously or in succession . . . . A remarkable instance of what can, in this manner, be accomplished, is afforded by the Close brothers; who founded the now famous Close colony, near Lemars in northwestern Iowa. These young Englishmen, of high social standing, began three years ago, the experiment of farming on a large scale. At first controlling but moderate capital, they now have 300,000 acres in their enterprise.



The colony is a sort of community, into which each one who enters must bring at least \$2,500 and many do bring several times that amount. This is, of course, private property. There is nothing socialistic in their mutual relations. Their astonishing growth in wealth is one of the wonders of the west. But it is not their social standing or community regulations which constitutes the central interest of this colony. That lies in the fact that they have proved beyond a doubt that modest capital, invested in this region, with industry and intelligence, will in a life-time multiply into wealth. The estimates of one who has visited this region may contain minor errors, but their conclusions are doubtless substantially correct. On a capital of \$2,500, invested in agriculture the return is equivalent to 54 per cent. at the end of two years. The raising of stock promises a profit, calculated from actual experience, of nearly 100 per cent in three years. Other industries are equally remunerative; and by combining them, it can readily be seen that an active intelligent man can find here the road to competence if not to wealth. Small capitalists understand this; and already a contract has been let for the erection of one hundred houses this season in this colony, with prospect that the number will be doubled. Looking at such instances of unexampled prosperity, it cannot be questioned that . . . the man who has enough for a start in life, in casting about him for the most promising opening, can scarcely do better than to follow the terse maxim of the Chautauqua sage. For him, it means comfort, health, happiness and wealth. For the great commonwealth which invites

him it means internal development, intelligent citizens, and the leading place upon the future roll of States.<sup>161</sup>

How extensively Englishmen of the better class applied themselves to grain farming and stock raising it is difficult to say: in February, 1881, they already owned thousands of well improved acres, had expended over \$500,000 in Plymouth County, and many had ample capital in reserve for any necessary requirements. And the Closes had then only begun to bring in "the wealth and brawn of merrie England to this garden spot". Members of the Close colony worked their own farms, instead of letting them to tenants, hiring such labor as they required at an average for the whole year of about \$17.50 a month and board. Contract work by the piece was also largely employed, and labor was plentiful.

The interesting feature about the little city of Le Mars that early gained a somewhat exaggerated notoriety throughout the United States and England was that it lay at "the center of a colony of 500 wealthy Englishmen, many of them of noble blood, who live like veritable lords and spend from \$500 to \$600 a month for their common living expenses."<sup>162</sup> A colony of such generous livers was an advantage to the town, and so it grew rapidly.

Eighteen miles southeast of Le Mars at Quorn, upon the West Fork of the Little Sioux River,

lived William B. Close. He and W. Roylance Court, Jr., owned a two thousand acre stock farm, with first class buildings and barns, and two sheep cotes each one hundred feet long. With the help of seven pupils "growing up with the country", they cared for 2000 sheep, graded in from thoroughbred Cotswolds, and a herd of hundreds of Shorthorn grade cattle. The special stock farm of James and Fred Close, also assisted by seven pupils under tuition, consisted of 960 acres, a three-story frame residence, fine stabling for thirty horses, barns, sheds, storage for hay and grain, and so on: their live stock numbered 800 sheep, including 100 thoroughbred Leicesters, bucks and ewes, also 320 head of cattle, and over 200 Berkshire and Poland China hogs. The Closes announced that the returns from their three stock farms were as large as those from wheat, and surer, though slower, although more capital was needed to carry on the business.<sup>163</sup>

The English colonists seem to have gone extensively into sheep raising. In May, 1880, the Hon. Captain Reynolds Moreton bought an improved farm of 960 acres one and one-half miles northwest of Le Mars. Here he quickly put up the finest improvements in the country, such as a two-story seventeen-room house which it was alleged cost \$20,000 and two commodious barns with hay



mows, besides cornercribs, cattle yards, pigpens, and other improvements. He owned herds of cattle and hogs at Dromore Farm numbering two hundred each, and Cotswold, Oxford Down, and Manchester Down sheep, including twenty-five bucks imported from England.<sup>164</sup> Many of the English settlers found a good run for sheep along the bluffs near the larger streams, such as the fine breezy bluffs of the Big Sioux River. In a letter published in England in 1879, William B. Close made a long statement, the first and last paragraphs of which read as follows:

I cannot imagine more perfect runs for sheep than those afforded by the Bluffs near the larger streams and rivers. These bluff lands, too rolling and hilly for the purpose of cultivation, are covered with the same growth of grass described in my last letter, and closely resemble the "downs" in this country, so well suited to sheep. Sheep are remarkably free from diseases, and foot-rot is practically unknown, as the sheep have always dry ground under them. As I have only had sheep one year, I will give the experience of some farmers from Holstein, who came over in '74 with a few hundred pounds each, and are now the most well-to-do of their class in their county, Crawford. Having been brought up as shepherds, and to the business of raising and fattening sheep for the Hamburgh-London market, they have given their attention exclusively to sheep farming. They preferred Cotswolds to other breeds of sheep, as affording both good



wool and mutton. Before investing in sheep myself, I investigated their operations, and can vouch that the figures I give below do not overstate their success. . . .

It will thus be seen how very profitable sheep can be made to be with those who know how to tend them. Apart from their fetching a good price for mutton, wool is sold in Chicago at about the same price it realises in England, and yet the cost of keeping sheep is almost *nil* in Iowa as compared with the cost of keeping them in this country.<sup>165</sup>

Because the winter of 1880-1881 proved to be exceptionally severe and some English farmers like the Hon. A. F. Sugden in Arlington Township, Woodbury County, suffered the loss of hundreds of sheep in blizzards and snowdrifts, Captain Moreton declared this first misfortune would teach Englishmen to make ample preparation for feeding and caring for their stock by putting up adequate shelter against storms. Of twelve thousand sheep owned by the colonists, seven thousand produced a clip of wool much better than in States farther east. Despite losses, substantial profit attended the colony's operations during the first year or two, and at least one observer concluded that "every one is or ought to be a richer man for having gone to Le Mars."<sup>166</sup>

In the spring of 1881 the report spread far and wide that nothing but success had crowned the

English colony at Le Mars. One writer<sup>167</sup> in England asserted that whenever perils threatened it, such as locusts, drought, storms, or falling prices for wheat, he hoped that the ability and courage which had served the colonists thus far would again avail them. "Iowa", he declared, "relies on the diversity of its products, and already the colonists are devoting their attention to cattle and sheep rather than to wheat." Mixed farming or diversified agriculture, begun with modest capital and continued with industry and intelligence, promised to make the patient farmer wealthy.

As the counties of northwestern Iowa then lay upon the edge of the open range or cattle ranch country, one advantage to stock men was the fact that the "herd law" permitted stock to run at large under the care of herders during the spring and summer. There being no fences, a boy with a pony and dogs could take care of five or six hundred head of cattle or 1500 sheep for five dollars a month.<sup>168</sup> That this region long remained open to such a custom is doubtful since the country improved and filled up rapidly with settlers, fences enclosed cultivated fields, and prairie grass became scarcer for general grazing purposes.

Dairying seems to have appealed to some of the immigrants as may be gathered from a news item:

Mrs. Col. Fenton brought to town fifty pounds of

butter, which she sold to Miller & Co., the grocers, for twenty-one cents per pound. The only thing particularly worthy of note about this transaction is the fact that this lot of butter was the first manufactured for sale in the English colony. The butter was of prime quality.<sup>169</sup>

Colonel James Fenton, one of the many Scotchmen of the colony, owned a thousand acre farm in Henry Township, Plymouth County, and early stocked it with thoroughbred imported cattle and well-bred calves and heifers selected from the best Shorthorn and Hereford herds in the State, thus making his herd at Carlton Stock Farm one of the most valuable in the whole countryside. James Birrell Nicholson, another Scotchman, with the aid of his sons conducted a Shorthorn and Poland China farm of five thousand acres.<sup>170</sup>

James B. Warren and G. C. Maclagan (the latter also a Scotchman) purchased a splendid two hundred acre stock farm just west of Le Mars, known as Floyd Farm, which they sold later to the Hon. Ronald Jervis and M. R. Margesson; and not far away W. McOran Campbell of Tullicewan Castle, Dumbartonshire, Scotland, arrived a little later to look after a famous herd of Polled Angus on a thousand acre farm which he called the Inchinnoch. The Paulton brothers, who lived at or near Orange City for one year, bought a

place two and one-half miles east of Le Mars in 1881. Arthur Gee owned Westbourne Farm. Jack Wakefield spent his time raising cattle near Seney. Alfred Currie Colledge and J. H. Preston bought a two hundred and twenty-three acre farm four miles south of Le Mars and named it Prestledge. A. R. T. Dent (a son of Lady Dent) and A. Langley also ran a "plantation"; while A. W. Moore bought five hundred acres of the Close brothers near Correctionville. G. Garnett and H. Rickards owned Garrickdale Farm and George E. Ward engaged especially in the breeding and importing of Shorthorn cattle near Hawarden; while H. Hilliard and Charles Kay farmed near Ireton. A dozen miles or so southeast of Sioux City Captain Barlow of Manchester raised a large establishment which is still known as Barlow Hall. Herbert Cope owned Gypsy Hill Farm in Washington Township and Troscod just west of Le Mars.<sup>171</sup> The practice of naming farms was introduced into the country by British settlers, and it was not uncommon for letters to come to the United States from England addressed to such farms without the name of the post office.<sup>172</sup>

So greatly did the English and Scotch colonists interest themselves in blooded stock that the Close brothers, James Fenton, Colledge and Preston, Lord Hobart, Captain Moreton, and Reginald



Moreton at different times won prizes and premiums at the county fair on horses, cattle, sheep, and poultry.<sup>173</sup> The new settlers took pride in such matters and were constantly importing thoroughbreds from England. Thus, William B. Close obtained for the Albion stables Elsham, reputed to be the highest bred stallion in Iowa in his day. Bought by Frank C. Cobden from Edmund Tattersall, the winner of more Derbys than any other man, this animal was described as follows:

He is as highly bred an animal as can be found anywhere, and a perfect beauty. He is a bay and stands sixteen hands high, weighs eleven hundred, and has every point of equine excellence known to horsemen. He was sired by Knowsley (by Stockwell out of Gen Peel's dam) out of Violet (by Voltiguer-Garland by Langar), a pedigree which old whips appreciate. But Elsham needs no famous ancestry to win admiration, for a mere glance at him shows every inch a horse, and all that a horse should be.<sup>174</sup>

It was at Sioux City that Elsham won a first prize as the best thoroughbred and another for the best get of five colts.

Coach horses also made their appearance; but running horses naturally enough came to be the special concern of the younger members of the colony. The profits of farming were all well enough, but dear to every English heart were outdoor sports. Fond of racing by temperament and

training, the physically fit, athletic, vigorous type of Britisher found the taste of cowboy life upon the edge of the free range cattle country just what he wanted for his favorite recreation was usually riding. Poultney Bigelow, the famous journalist, told of his visit to the English colony at Le Mars and pictured the life there in glowing terms:

The young men who make up this community are, for the most part, graduates of Oxford or Cambridge.<sup>175</sup> On one farm I met two tall and handsome young farmers whose uncle had been a distinguished member of Parliament. The last time I had seen them was in a London drawing-room. This time they tramped me through the mud and manure of the barnyard to show me some newly bought stock. They were boarding with a Dutch farmer at three dollars per week in order to learn practical farming. Both were thoroughly contented, and looking forward to the future with pleasure.

Another young farmer whom I noticed on horseback with top-boots, flannel shirt, sombrero, and belt-knife, was pointed out to me as the grandson of the author of *Paley's Theology*. He was attending a cattle auction at Le Mars, Iowa.

There, too, was a son of Thomas Bayley Potter, the distinguished honorary secretary of the Cobden Club, and M. P. for Rochdale, who had come out only to take a look at the place, but who so fell in love with the life that he decided to invest. One had been an admiral in the royal navy, another had been connected with a Shanghai bank. There was a brother to Lord

Ducie, not to speak of future baronets, viscounts, and honorables. These young men had all been attracted here by their love of a free, active life, and the knowledge that they would enter a society congenial to their tastes and early associations . . . .

They have the very best ground for fox hunting in the world — a rolling prairie with a creek here and there. Every colonist makes it his chief care, after buying his farm, to breed a good hunter for the steeple-chases. They have regular meets for fox or “paper” hunts, as the case may be. They last year opened a racing track, and wound up the races with a grand ball.<sup>176</sup>

### XIII

## FARM PUPILS IN THE ENGLISH COLONY

During his visit to England in 1880, it is said, William B. Close had a conference with the famous Commoner, John Bright, and gained his support for a scheme which had "happily suggested itself to the Closes": they determined to accept young men as farm pupils for a fixed compensation, just as in England young men were taken into a barrister's office or chambers.<sup>177</sup> And so the Closes undertook to receive on their own stock farms a certain number of newcomers, show them all they themselves had done, and help them to avoid pitfalls in their dealings with local farmers and land agents until they were ready and able to make a start for themselves.<sup>178</sup>

These young "gentleman" pupils, according to an eye-witness, were made to plow, drive cattle, and perform every sort of farm labor.<sup>179</sup> At the end of a year they were presumed to be introduced to the mysteries of western farming and qualified to buy land for themselves and "employ one or two experienced hands to look after their affairs."

Generally speaking, "the young gentleman em-



igrant", a product peculiar to England, had two courses open upon arrival in Iowa: either he could hire out to the ordinary American farmer for his keep and possibly a small wage from the start; or he could "board in the family of people of his own social grade and education and have much the same comforts and refinements he would have at home, say in a farm-house of the better class or in a quiet country vicarage, with the social advantages pertaining to that style of life."<sup>180</sup> For an American it is not difficult to judge which alternative appealed to a member of the English "gentleman" class.

Early in 1881 the Closes were reported as having some three hundred boys under tuition for farming or stock raising. However exaggerated that newspaper statement may be, Robert Benson of London testified that the system had on the whole worked much better than could have been expected, "considering that many of the newcomers came out with somewhat extravagant notions, and were as ignorant of how to hold their own in matters of business as they were of practical farming."<sup>181</sup> In a letter penned from England in 1921 William B. Close writes of the young men who came to Le Mars:

I offered for the sum of £25 to give all advice in England as to going out; to get cheap first-class trans-

portation by the White Star Line (and I may mention the rate was £12 in those days); that my brothers Fred and James would meet the newcomer at Le Mars, find him a place on a farm where he could learn something about the conditions in the country; and to buy 160 acres of land for him without any commission if required, engaging to see that he got good land and title.

I was young and I did not know what I was doing, for although we had some splendid fellows join us, yet a number of parents seized the opportunity of loading on to us sons and relatives that were an embarrassment to them here, and who never would make good, so we had our hands full, as you may imagine. In addition we took some pupils on a stock farm we had, but never had any trouble with those boys. Amongst others who came there was Almeric Paget, now Lord Queenborough, who married Miss Whitney of New York, William Farquhar, Sir Basil Thompson, and others.

Some of the £25 boys behaved very badly indeed. They got money from their parents, spent it in riotous living, and then to shield themselves, wrote home that Close Brothers had invested their money and lost it. A Bishop's son was the worst among them! The consequence was that I found that stories affecting our credit were being spread about in England. I had great difficulty in hunting up the source of these stories, and we had an unhappy time. The Field Newspaper having heard some of these rumours, and doubting anyone of our standing could be doing what rumours said we were doing, sent out a correspondent

of theirs who knew the West of America, Mr. Townsend who wrote for their paper as "St. Kames". He arrived at Le Mars one day without disclosing his identity. He mixed with the boys at the Club, and he asked about Close Brothers, but could get nothing definite. He spent two weeks in trying to follow up any clue as to our not having acted fairly with the boys. I did not even know he was there making inquiries, when one day he walked into our office, asked to see me, told me who he was, told me the reason he had come, and said he could find not a single thing to back up the wicked rumours that had been spread in England by those two or three wretched boys, and he wrote a long article to the Field describing the whole colony, and saying that if he formed a colony as he thought he might, he would follow on the precise lines of Close Brothers and Company.

S. Nugent Townshend, the gentleman referred to by Mr. Close had come from southeastern Kansas "rather prepossessed than otherwise against the Le Mars settlement, and prepared to pity the young fellows"; but he left it "envying them their good fortune and their surroundings". In correspondence despatched to England he described the system as he encountered it on the farm perhaps most noted for its pupils, or "pups" as they were called by the Americans:

Captain Moreton is a father to the Colony, a good religious man, with great influence over all the young fellows. He farms about one thousand acres near the



town, and has twenty-two young fellows with him, on the same principle as the Close pupils, and these Moreton boys are taken specially good care of; but, of course, admission to the captain's establishment is not an easy matter to procure. His boys do all the work of the farm. Lord Hobart, when I was there, was mowing, assisted by two of Lord St. Vincent's sons, and the hon. captain was feeding a thrashing machine. It was hot, but everyone looked happy, even young Moreton, who was firing and driving the steam engine. And again the picnic aspect, despite the real hard and remunerative work, struck me irresistably.

I had a long chat with Capt. Moreton on new beginners in the United States, and he said half the breakdowns were in consequence of drink and bad food. No young English gentleman could work hard on a diet of beans and bacon, such as he gets in the house of the Western American farmer. So the captain keeps a generous table, and his boys are certainly a credit to his system; clear-eyed, bronzed, and muscular, in the highest health and spirits. How much more sensible and useful lives they live here than they would do if at home.<sup>182</sup>

Strange as it may seem to Americans to-day, vacancies for boarders and pupils on some of the best farms in the English colony were widely advertised in the old country. One pamphlet opens with Mr. Townshend's pleasant picture of the landscape around Le Mars:

English farm-houses dot hill-sides near and far; a few poplar-like cottonwood trees grow well as shade



and shelter for these homesteads; and on the gentle hills to the north, surrounded by large steadings, heavy clustering clumps of cottonwood, and splendidly farmed fields, dominates the residence of the Hon. Capt. Moreton (brother to the Earl of Ducie) . . . .<sup>183</sup>

But even from this pleasant scene, where Lord Harris was expected in a few days to revive the highest standard of cricket, I must go and trot westward.

Farm after farm — this English, that English, the next English — we pass, and at length draw bridle at the end of twenty miles, to find ourselves at the door of the wonderfully comfortable house of Mr. White Marsh. We had driven through hay to the horse's knees on this property for some time; fairly good looking sheep dotted the hill some half-a-mile off, and everything had the air of solidity and comfort so pleasing and unusual to see in a new State. Mr. White Marsh was then an absentee; so on the backward trail we put up at his neighbour's, Messrs. Eller, who, with Mr. De Moleyns, had asked us to dinner. English servants, English cooking, and thorough English neatness and cleanliness characterised this property also. The Messrs. Eller had adopted the Close system of leasing for one year, on share of produce, such of their land as they were not easily able to work themselves at first; and this plan is certainly a very commendable one. But now this letter has run its full descriptive course, a course the length of which can only be justified by the fact that it will interest at least twelve hundred parents<sup>184</sup> of six hundred of some of the finest and noblest boys in or out of England. Very few indeed — not more than 1

per cent. — “by the wayside fell and perished” in Le Mars colony. I will not exactly say that the Messrs. Close have selected the place where most money is to be made at corn-growing and cattle-fattening, and their move further north is, in my opinion, a move in the wrong direction, for the winters are cruelly severe here as it is; but I will say that money can be made, and pleasantly made, and 20 per cent. can fairly be expected to be realised on the original investment after three or four years here. The climate is healthy for man and beast.<sup>185</sup>

The interesting pamphlet from which the above quotation is taken fails to name the English gentlemen who desired pupils, but quotes at length from their letters giving the necessary particulars for the enlightenment of parents and sons in England. One stock farmer wrote:

My house is a wooden one, as almost all houses are here, whether large or small. I have two sitting rooms, seven bedrooms, and a bath room with hot and cold water; every room is heated by a flue from the furnace in the cellar.<sup>186</sup>

Another “experienced practical farmer” in April, 1881, wanted two more pupils to fill the places of two who had left to start farms of their own: on his 1500 acres, with 1500 sheep, 300 head of cattle, and 100 hogs, he would be glad to receive two young fellows who were “prepared to work: under 20 years of age preferred: and to

take an interest in the affair, or I would rather be without them."<sup>187</sup> The son of an English country vicar also listed vacancies for two pupils on his farm, adding:

Pupils would have 5000 acres to see managed, which we cut up into 15 farms. Land is worth about 30s to 40s per acre, and should a young fellow give his mind to the work after he has seen the American ways for a year or so, he could either buy or rent a farm and go into stock raising, or hogs, either will pay about 50 per cent. Chicago is our great stock market, so we are always sure of a good market. I have a very experienced American foreman, who would give instructions in the various ways and means of farming in the Far West. The life is rough, and no one ought to come who cannot stand roughing it at times. Shooting—wild geese, duck, rabbit, prairie hens, prairie wolf, deer, and many small birds. Outfit—good strong clothes, saddle and gun; boots bought out here are more suited to the country . . . . I may say we have out here, Hon. Capt. Moreton, brother to the Earl of Ducie, Hon. A. Sugden, Col. Fenton, A. Lubbock, son of Sir J. Lubbock; and many others, about 300 English Gentlemen in all.<sup>188</sup>

Some Englishmen who wanted pupils procured for them in England furnished photographs of their farms. The owner of a large stock and agricultural farm situated "one mile from a rising town in the English Colony" offered excellent board, lodging, and tuition for gentlemen wishing



to study American methods, and wrote to his agent in England as follows:

I have a farm partly leased, partly in my own hands, under my manager, of 743 acres . . . . It is a large hog and cattle farm, managed under the best and newest methods, and with all the best machinery, shedding, stabling and yards, as used in that country. There is an excellent house, well sheltered, and in the prettiest situation in the district. I have put on an addition solely for the use of pupils wishing to learn farming before commencing for themselves. My manager Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ has sole control of the farming operations, and his wife looks after the house. He will give all opportunity to pupils wishing to learn farming to do so, and give them every advice he can, but he cannot be in any way responsible to parents or guardians for young men who do not care to work . . . . The class of men I would like to see on my place is such as would work for their own sake, and who would do credit to anything they learnt on the farm, by getting on well afterwards . . . .

We have a great many English gentlemen settled in the Le Mars district, and going out there you would find no lack of society, and at the same time find yourself in one of the best districts of the States for investing in land for farming, or as many young fellows have done, for opening up a business in the town. A flax mill and a paper mill are both wanted there at present, and there are no end of openings for starting in various ways. My place has the advantage of being so near the town that one can find out all that can



be learnt of the district, and yet get the advantage of living in the country. You can study farming and yet look into other industries too. . . . I have about 300 acres arable, and 100 acres enclosed pasture in my own hands at present, and of course, as in all that country, unlimited free grazing.

You will see by the situation of my property that it is very well situated as a central position for studying the country and gaining information. I know many trustworthy gentlemen out there too, who would give any young men I introduce to them, perfectly disinterested information and advice on any subject they might wish information on . . . . You will see by the elevated plan of the yards [photographs of the farm were furnished] that they are well above the river, though not far from it, the House is well sheltered from the north by a fine young wood and a very high thick willow hedge behind it.<sup>189</sup>

T. G. Mellersh of Cheltenham, England, in 1881 prepared for distribution a twelve page pamphlet advertising "vacancies for boarders and pupils", adding a note that "several gentlemen and young fellows from the Public Schools intend going out early next spring to the English Colony in Iowa, and Southern Minnesota"; but he published no tuition terms, not even in the letter he received from a man who lived in England:

My brothers . . . . have now a large farm of their own, where they raise cattle, sheep and hogs. At first only two went out, but they reported so well upon it,

that the third joined them last year (1880), and I learn from them by letters received this week, that (having got over the longest and severest winter ever known in the West) they look forward to a successful and profitable year . . . . For any pupil going to them £— are to be paid . . . . When he reaches Iowa he can stay a month on my brother's farm, to see whether he likes the life, etc; if at the end of that time he decides upon remaining a further sum of £—is to be paid. This will entitle him to a year's residence with my brothers, with whom he will live precisely as one of themselves, and will be taught everything necessary to become a stock raiser himself . . . . At the end of his year's residence, should he wish to buy a farm for himself, my brothers will themselves give him all the benefit of their experience as regards choice of site, price of land, authenticity of the deeds (a most important point), &c., and will also when he has settled down help him in every way with advice, etc., to become successful.<sup>190</sup>

The farm pupil idea, novel and picturesque as it seems to-day, necessarily aroused considerable curiosity among the American population in every part of northwestern Iowa. When a party of twenty-five young Englishmen arrived in 1882, six of them as pupils for Captain Moreton, a *Le Mars* editor observed that the city and county were becoming the headquarters of "the very pick and flower of immigration from Great Britain, a fact that exasperates our rivals not a little." At the

same time, the system also evoked criticism. People in England believed that a tuition charge on American pioneer farms, though only half as high as in England, was ridiculous, dishonest, and unjustified because the pupil did enough work to earn his board and lodging. In stating and answering this sort of argument, one writer declared:

I have frequently heard people allude to gentlemen of unexceptionable position, living in comfort in America or the Colonies, who take pupils into their families at moderate premiums, as if they were a species of swindler. This arises, I fancy, from a common misconception that all farmers in America are upon the same social plane and live in the same style; that they are all burning with anxiety for the company and responsibility of young Englishmen whom they never saw, and who as a class have not unfortunately in these countries a very good name, who have never done a day's work in their lives, have not the remotest notion of how to set about a single farming operation, and may quite possibly turn out both idle and dissipated.

Such novices, "gently-nurtured, inexperienced, soft-handed", when set to doing chores such as fetching cows, cleaning stables, cutting wood, and other menial things unbecoming an English gentleman, could hardly be expected to be always "on the jump". Reared as the sons of squires and parsons, and just out of school, how could they

handle plows, axes, and machinery satisfactorily? Pupils in general, according to one reliable observer, were a nuisance, a liability, a burden to their employers. Of course they did some work, but even on that score an employer would shake his head with a grim smile. On his side he would point to "damage and risk of damage to horses and machinery, a very real and ever present difficulty among pupils, and the risk of getting a black sheep who cannot at such a distance be shipped off at a moment's notice as in England, and for whose baneful presence no money can adequately compensate."<sup>191</sup>

Nor was unfavorable criticism confined to English people: Americans also looked askance at the farm pupil system.<sup>192</sup> How long it lingered among English farmers in Iowa is not easy to state; but by the month of August, 1882, the Close brothers at least had completely abandoned it as both troublesome and unprofitable. Some indication of the character of the system and one of its unfortunate after effects may be gathered from a news item on the subject published at Le Mars in 1885:

A suit of some interest to our English friends has just been terminated in the court of Queen's Bench, London. Action for libel was brought about a year ago against the Edinburgh Scotsman by Henry Shear-



man for republishing a letter from the Chicago Herald in reference to plaintiff's so-called "farming school" in southern Minnesota. Mr. Shearman claimed \$50,000 damages from the Scotsman but after over a year spent in collecting testimony the case was finally dismissed. Mr. Shearman's philanthropic scheme was to send out to this country young men, sons of English gentlemen, and secure for them openings as farmers in southern Minnesota and other parts of the state. A fee of 60 to 75 guineas was exacted from the "pupils," as they were called, to insure them the same positions as the heads of families on selected farms. Shearman issued circulars of a very attractive character showing the desirability of the positions he proposed to secure for his "pupils," and had his agents over here, who received his "pupils" and conducted them to their farms. The pupils, upon arriving, found that they were treated as mere farm laborers, doing the meanest and most menial work, and getting less than the farm laborers' wages. The case was called before Baron Pollock of the court of queens' bench, and a special jury, in the latter part of February, and, upon motion of defendant's counsel, dismissed with costs, the plaintiff not being prepared for trial.<sup>193</sup>

Stories and yarns of the doing of the "pups" still circulate freely in and about Le Mars: unhitching heavy draft horses out in the field to indulge in a running race with side bets, shooting at their master's prize steers and pet hogs, riding pell-mell into town, doing every kind of ordinary

farm work in the crudest, most ludicrous way, wild and boisterous wherever they went—all that and much more supplied widespread amusement among their rough-and-ready Yankee neighbors for many years to come.

It was enough to make some people smile when Captain Moreton advertised in English papers that he would teach thirty young men the science of farming for the sum of \$600 each per year; they stood amazed when scores of young men of the well-to-do middle classes and even the younger sons of British noblemen flocked over to take advantage of such and similar offers until Le Mars had in its vicinity “several hundreds of these boys who could not tell a plow from a pumpkin”. Americans roared with laughter or the more puritanical ones looked on with long faces when the fun began: the boys would do little dribs of work, and make up for it by mounting their ponies in true wild west style, dash into town in cavalcades, and “paint the place a rip, staring red.”

But the farm pupil system was not without its permanent effects on the community: it brought money into circulation and tradesmen reaped a golden harvest. Many of the lads were spend-thrifts, and all had remittances from home: Le Mars accordingly experienced a boom of no mean proportions. Fine business blocks sprang up as

if by magic; immigration poured in; the town became the center of commerce for a vast area for miles around; and Le Mars obtained a striking individuality of its own.

## XIV

### IOWA ENGLISHMEN AND THE RUGBY COLONY

About the time that the Close brothers founded the English settlement in Plymouth County, Thomas Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, helped found Rugby in eastern Tennessee. There, upon lands tilled by slaves before the Civil War, rose small farmsteads in the hands of graduates from the famous English public school of Rugby; there, as in Iowa, the younger sons of the English gentry apprenticed themselves to the earlier holders of land until they in their turn acquired land and became "the gentlemen farmers of the future." The Rugby colony thus resembled the Le Mars settlement, at least in its plan.

Hughes roused some opposition among his countrymen: why did he not show his patriotism by going to Canada, and why did he prefer the South to Iowa or other western States? Canada, he answered, was too far from England, and besides it had long winters and no variety of occupations. And as for the American West, "droughts, flies, difficulties of drainage, and from five to six



months' enforced idleness, so far as agriculture is concerned, had to be considered."<sup>194</sup>

The Tennessee experiment was eagerly watched by the English of Le Mars. Early in the year 1881 they heard that the colonists had been cheated, that their land was worthless, and that their community would be transplanted to Minnesota.<sup>195</sup> A few months later came the tidings of the death of Philip Nairn (once a member of the Le Mars colony) and of the raging of a typhoid epidemic at Rugby. When the collapse of the colony was announced in February, 1882, its boys were urged to come to Le Mars "bag and baggage"; but at the end of the year Rugby<sup>196</sup> still occupied its place on the map, with a population of two hundred, "the majority of whom spend their time in hunting and playing billiards." As owners of nearly 30,000 acres of land, the English settlers of Tennessee were reputed to be cultivating only fifty acres; and shortly afterward they mortgaged their tract to the extent of £20,000. "What a vivid contrast", remarks a Le Mars editor, "Rugby presents to our own rushing, pushing, thriving, bustling Plymouth Colony!" The pitiful condition of things in that region in 1883 caused the same writer to pen the following excellent editorial on "Our Penniless Young Gentlemen":

An anxious inquiry has lately been raised in some

of the more thoughtful of journals in England as to what was to become of the large class there of penniless young gentlemen: the younger sons of the gentry, well-built, well-educated, clever young fellows whose fathers' moderate income goes to the elder son and as dower to the daughters. The outlook in England is so utterly bare for these lads that the only alternative now suggested is between trade and a regiment of which the privates shall be the sons of gentlemen. The objection made to the latter course is the life of enforced idleness in an inferior position and to the first the social degradation. The experiment of Rugby, in Tennessee, as we all know was some people's safety-valve for this social difficulty, and the sons of the gentry came to it in large numbers, to play tennis and to drink and lounge in the Tabard Inn. The place is now left to a few hard-working, uneducated men who will succeed in the end. But the penniless young gentry are no better off than before.

The result among the young Englishmen who have flocked to northwestern Iowa stands out in striking contrast to that of those who mustered at Rugby. They belonged to the same class, brought with them similar habits and like expectations, and were counterparts of the young gentlemen who settled in Tennessee. Among them was an inconsiderable quota of dissipated and lalh-de-dah young fellows, some of whom have paid the penalty of their weakness, though most of them have profited by the rugged experiences which all who will live in this region must pass through. We have now a flourishing English colony in this region, composed of intelligent industrious young men.

They have acquired a taste for business and enjoy themselves as much as any Hawkeye can, in developing a farm or driving a bargain. We have room enough in the all-absorbing West for all the gritty young fellows in England who are ambitious to live to some purpose. They will find ample scope for their energies on these undeveloped prairies, but they must know that the price of success is — attention to business.

An English writer a few years later gave his estimate of the results of the emigration of “young gentlemen” and alleged that upon the whole England might well feel proud of them. That many bemoaned their lot and returned home, cursing the country and every one connected with it and minimising their own share in the failure to succeed; that many brought disgrace and ridicule to themselves and their country was not surprising when one considered the variety of material that of necessity made up the exodus; but the fact remained “that the gently nurtured of this nation cheerfully undertake and show a fair measure of success in a career which would appal the equivalent class in any other country in the world.”<sup>197</sup>

## XV

### FAME OF THE LE MARS COLONY

When the Close brothers had once embarked upon their scheme of promoting northwestern Iowa, and by reason of their prominent connections in England induced Englishmen of wealth and position to act upon their representations, the newspapers of Le Mars missed no opportunity to let the reading public know all about the enterprise to the last detail. Almost every week for a number of years they chronicled the arrival of immigrants from England and introduced them by name to the Yankee inhabitants of city and country. Thus, in the spring of 1884 came a "jolly company of young men": M., R., and H. P. Margesson, R. and E. Fullbrook, A. Bower, W. Edsell, G. Morris, R. Stanhope, and M. Farquhar. One interesting account, "Immigrants in Broadcloth", reads as follows:

A rare sight indeed is the Lemars depot on the arrival of fresh accessions to the English Colony. The new comers confound all our knowledge and established traditions of immigrants, for immigrants indeed they are. They descend from the recesses of the



Pullman palace cars dressed in the latest London and Paris styles, with Oxford hats, bright linen shining on their bosoms, a gold repeater ticking in the depths of their fashionably cut vest pockets and probably carrying in their hands the latest agony in canes. If ladies accompany the party their graceful forms are shrouded in the most elegant of cloaks or dolmans, their heads being surmounted by the most coquettish of bonnets and their fresh countenances beam with the ruddy glow of health and good nature. The children, too, look as if they had just stepped out of a band-box and nowhere among young or old is there a hint of travel-stained weariness or poverty.

The scene at the baggage car is as peculiar. Stout Japanned and heavy leathern boxes and trunks are tossed on the platform by the inveterate baggage-smasher, who seems to make a final effort to render their seemingly invulnerable joints. Box after box, trunk after trunk,<sup>198</sup> until a miniature mountain has been built on the platform. We recall an instance last summer of a single family that had eighty-two pieces of baggage, all of the strong and desirable variety.

They are by no means so dainty as they seem. In a day or two the men are seen on the streets with the plainest of stout corduroy suits, with knee-breeches and leather leggings. Great, strong, hardy-looking fellows they are, and though most of them are fresh from the English schools and universities, they have plenty of muscle and snap. We doubt whether any little town in the great West, since its settlement began, ever received any considerable installment of

such "immigrants" as may be seen almost any day dropping off at the union depot in Lemars.

The question will be asked, What kind of settlers for a new country do these dainty and wealthy looking persons make? and the answer is, the best in the world.<sup>199</sup>

The Le Mars press faithfully chronicled the doings of the promoters and of the "colonists" themselves every time news items of the personal type could be discovered, nothing of interest escaping the vigilant local reporters even of that day; and since one paper boasted of a mailing-list that included England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and Germany,<sup>200</sup> its "colony" news gained some currency abroad, though, of course, not as much as in American journals. Newspapers throughout Iowa contributed plenty of publicity to the subject; nor were they careful to omit an element of exaggeration, as the following illustration bears witness:

So great has become the importance of this exclusively English colony that an office both in Le Mars and London are necessary to conduct its business. The caste feeling is said to be very strong, and none are admitted but the pure bloods of wealth and character. Any number of Lords are now scattered over Plymouth and Sioux counties. If they all have [the] energy and vim of the Close Brothers they will make northwestern Iowa blossom like the rose.<sup>201</sup>

A correspondent writing from Le Mars guaranteed that a visit to the English community (he does not state how widely scattered and indefinite it was, with American farmers and townspeople in the region at all times more numerous) "would almost convince one that he was in England, so completely do the customs of that nation predominate."<sup>202</sup> Another Iowa newspaper enthusiastically informed its readers:

A large proportion of the settlers are English—drawn from the great middle classes of the mother country—men of brawn and brains, of cash and credit, of labor and life. These people are settling here by scores, hundreds and thousands. They all have money, and are all enterprising, shrewd, and full of resources. In a short time they will own the whole country, and under their hands it will blossom like a garden.<sup>203</sup>

A much more moderate pen picture of Le Mars and its immigrant arrivals appeared at Dubuque, although the correspondent's eulogy of Germans and Teutons as a useful type of settler probably fits the Hollanders who had been going to Orange City in large numbers for at least a decade:

The most notable feature of this place is the incessant flow of foreign immigration to it—English, Germans and some Hibernians, too. It is a sight as amusing as it is novel to our natives, who have never been abroad or spent any time in any of our principal



seaport cities, to witness those people as they alight from the trains at the depot move through the streets in groups and congregate around the hotels and public places distinctly exhibiting "by the cut of their jib" their respective colors (nationality), with leather leggings of the Englishman, and the Teutons. I saw one of the latter, who had room enough in the seat of his pants, if such they might be called, to hold a fair sized balloon, and as he exposed himself to the fresh breeze that was blowing, I thought of him only as a balloon and the perilous ascent which he might suddenly be called upon to make, much against his will and far above his ambition. But his covering was too open all around for dangerous inflation so he did not go up but stood safely anchored to the ground with a monster pair of wooden shoes. With his toggery and the habiliments which covered his wife and four children he could furnish sail enough for a small sized ship, and I am sure their wooden shoes would answer the purpose of life boats in an emergency. Yet with all their grotesque appearance one of them is worth more in the market of utility than a ship load of your fashionable society folks who would not be taught the noble art of production while they are self taught and excel in the simple knack of consumption. Yes, these same Teutons are welcomed settlers here, and are just the kind of material to develop a new country.

The English colony in town and country now numbers between four and five hundred against less than two hundred one year ago, and it is thought will reach a thousand before another year shall have expired . . . . The growth of this town is remarkable. Its population



has increased over thirty per cent since the last government census was taken, and should it continue at this rate for another year, and, it is believed it will, the population will not fall short of four thousand.<sup>204</sup>

Outside the State of Iowa, the press of St. Paul, Minnesota, made its readers well acquainted with "the New England of the Northwest" not only by reason of rail connections, but also because the settlers of that part of Iowa were expected to look to St. Paul as a market for their cattle and grain and to its merchants for their supplies. The *Pioneer Press*<sup>205</sup> took especial interest in the tide of emigration to Le Mars, and its fame among the better classes of Old England which had contributed men of known character and large resources such as "Capt. the Hon. Reynolds Moreton, R. N., who is a brother of the earl of Ducie; Lord Hobart, the future earl of Buckinghamshire; the son of Admiral Sir Sidney Dacres, K. C. B.; the two sons of Admiral Farquhar of the Royal British navy; a son of Sir John Lubbock, the member of parliament for the city of London; the son of Lord Alfred Paget; R. Potter, the son of the president of the Cobden club, and others of equally honorable connections and high blood."

A New York paper called attention to the fact that the United States, besides being an asylum

for the oppressed of all nations, was attracting at Le Mars the wealth and affluence of England "to our fertile lands and business advantages as ample opportunities for productive investments."<sup>206</sup> Besides telling about the 500 young Englishmen, nearly all unmarried, who had settled near Le Mars, an organ of public opinion at Chicago published the address of Mr. Walter, member of Parliament and proprietor of London's greatest newspaper, after his return to London from a visit in the West. With his wife and daughter "The Thunderer", as he was called, had attended a party given at Le Mars by Fred Brooks Close on the evening of October 5, 1881, in honor of his marriage with Miss Margaret Humble. Speaking to English farmers on the occasion of the annual dinner of the Abingdon Agricultural Society, he mentioned the names of the gentlemen who had emigrated to Iowa because he was "firmly persuaded that America will become more a field of enterprise for thousands of young English gentlemen farmers and other classes of people."<sup>207</sup>

Under the heading, "Young Man, Go West", one of the most widely read and popular magazines<sup>208</sup> of the time published Poultney Bigelow's account of a visit to Le Mars in 1880 and the colony of about three hundred Englishmen who had undertaken, "with moderate capital and in-

finite pluck, to build up their fortunes in this country." The writer had carefully examined northwestern Iowa, and he gave "the dollars and cents" of farming in that region as an evidence of its wonderful future. The *Le Mars Sentinel* in reprinting his article and referring to his "calm and judicial language" declared editorially:

Plymouth county is rapidly arresting the attention of men everywhere, and those who examine it most minutely are best satisfied that it is the most desirable region of cheap lands in America, for investment and settlement. When the leading magazines and journals in the world are presenting its claims on the attention of both capital and labor, we may rest assured that it has merits of no ordinary character. He who owns a farm in Plymouth county owns a fortune, and there are still fortunes in Northwestern Iowa for 100,000 enterprising families. But they are being rapidly appropriated and they who would have them, must secure them soon.

During its "boom" days Le Mars claimed the unique distinction of being better known in Great Britain than any other city of the United States. This resulted, of course, not only from the fact that the Close brothers and their fellow colonists were men of high social position in the old country, but also from the wide publicity given to their enterprise. The pamphlet<sup>209</sup> printed in several editions by the Closes found its way to the best

circles; while letters to the editors of well-known English newspapers and articles in magazines gave the "Gateway", as Le Mars was called by its American denizens, a fame out of all proportion to the number of Britishers who had availed themselves of residence within its borders. All these writings, like Poultney Bigelow's article, had one characteristic in common: they described agriculture and the live stock industry in Iowa, buttressed with figures, percentages, and tabular outlines, thus constituting a convincing form of propaganda.

Writing for an English magazine, Robert Benson informed the English people of the success of the community planted in Iowa, basing it not so much on the pleasures of the life as on the financial profits already accrued: he gave "an accurate account of the results obtained through four years' labour" in contrast with the estimates of others. After alluding to the university and public school men who had followed the lead of the Closes, Benson frankly pointed out some of the discomforts which necessarily attended settling in a new country:

It is not everyone, for instance, who can endure with equanimity the complete absence of good servants unless imported from England, or not to have his boots blacked except for an extra payment of ten



cents, or to get nothing but tea and coffee to drink, and that none of the best, and only salt pork badly cooked to eat, when off the beaten track. Moreover, the natives of the country, when travelling, whether to inspect land or to buy stock, and stopping for the night, as the custom is, at the nearest farm house, for a charge of 25 cents, as if it were an inn, sleep two in a bed, and do not wash; and an Englishman would give great offence who refused to conform to the first part at least of the custom, if the lack of accommodation made it necessary. Nor again does Iowa enjoy the equable cold of the "isothermal" region. It does not matter how many degrees below zero the thermometer is, if only it is perfectly still, and the sun is shining. But Iowa is liable, occasionally in the winter, to wind and low temperature combined, and then if one be delicate, there is nothing for it but to stay in houses which are well built and warm.<sup>210</sup>

C. W. Benson, a partner of the Close brothers in England, sent a lengthy communication to a Manchester newspaper<sup>211</sup> playing up the remarkable advantages of English emigration to Iowa, his object being to illustrate what could "still be done by people who go out prepared to put their hearts and heads into farming in Western America." Articles such as these had a wide circulation in the British Colonies, and afforded excellent copy for the press in Canada.<sup>212</sup> Amusingly different, however, was a letter from Le Mars to Manchester composed by a young Englishman

who, after relating his adventures as a duck-hunter, dashed "with refreshing kittenishness into the great hired-girl problem" and made "some surprising discoveries in social science", when he wrote:

Now as to the "helps," though they don't call their mistress "Mum," yet they are kept in perfect subjection. Of course, among men the tinker and tailor call one by one's surname, or even by one's Christian name if he happens to know it. To that you get used. Also in hotels all dine together, the working man and the swell. To us English it is wonderful how civil all Yankees are, nothing could be too good for us. They opened doors for us, carried our bags and never took a "tip" during our travels; but there the English, as a rule, carry revolvers and now and then use them, which creates respect.<sup>213</sup>

A Le Mars editor asked if "the callow swell" was "a saphead, or is he only trying to come Mark Twain on his English friends?"

London's greatest newspaper opened its columns to writers interested in the Le Mars project; and its owner, Mr. Walter, after a visit to his countrymen in Iowa, did not hesitate to acquaint everyone with what he saw. In the course of an after-dinner speech Mr. Walter declared:

And what I want to impress upon you is that it is exceedingly desirable in the interests of agriculture generally that in all the English counties there should

be a certain body of men able to advise neighbors who are about to start for that part of the world. [Hear, hear.] And I would like to exhort you who are not too old to try the experiment of my Lincolnshire friends, not to buy land—that is the last thing I would recommend—without twelve months' experience, but to go out first and see the country and become the fore-runners of others. If there be any here who would be the Caleb and Joshua, I should be very glad to give them hints. [Hear, hear.] Farmers couldn't do better than form an association in different parts of the country to enable people to go out and judge for themselves. That, I believe, is what Mr. Pell and his friends who went out to America a few years ago are doing. You may depend upon it that any Englishman going there who is a good judge of land, who is steady, and industrious, and not afraid of a rigorous climate, may commence a course of life which will make him prosperous and wealthy before he is 50 years of age.<sup>214</sup>

Had all the Englishmen whom he encountered at Le Mars stuck to their enterprise, Mr. Walter's prophecy would have come very near realization.

England's weekly purveyor of humor, *Punch*,<sup>215</sup> saw its chance for a joke at the expense of the emigrants at Le Mars. It presented a half-page cartoon depicting two handsome maids in the midst of preparing a meal in the kitchen. One of them holds an uncovered steaming sauce pan and the other is tending a leg of mutton suspended in

a high round stove which stands over hot coals on the floor. To the right are two athletic men just coming in from work, with shovels, picks, and spades upon their shoulders: one of them gazes hungrily at the food while the other, a man with heavy mustache and side whiskers, wipes the sweat from his manly brow. Under the cartoon heading, "Colonising in Iowa, U. S.", appears the parenthetical explanation, "A Hint to the Younger Sons of our Aristocracy, and eke to the Daughters thereof". The following dialogue ensues:

Lady Maria — How *late* you are, boys: your baths are ready, and I've mended your dress trousers, Jack. So look sharp and clean yourselves, and then you can lay the cloth, and keep an eye on the mutton while Emily and I are dressing for dinner.

Lord John — All right. How many are we to lay for?

Lady Emily — Eight. The Talbots are coming, and Major Cecil is going to bring the Duke of Stilton, who's stopping with him.



## XVI

### BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE IN THE ENGLISH COLONY

Although most of the Englishmen who took up residence in northwestern Iowa went to farming either for themselves or as pupils or farm laborers for others, some preferred to find work in neighboring towns, even when they owned land in the country. It is manifestly impossible to know what all these men did, but the following account may be taken as typical of what they set their hands and heads to.<sup>216</sup>

Besides the three Close brothers and Con Benson, who, as already related, did so much everywhere to bring untilled soil under cultivation and sold it in vast quantities, many more engaged in other lines of business. John Hopkinson and Fred Paley formed a partnership to do a commission business; and when the former became steward for the Close farms in Osceola County, Paley continued with J. C. Brockbank who had dissolved a partnership with Frank C. Cobden. The latter erected a fine brick block in Le Mars. Montague J. Chapman set up as a general insur-

ance agent and later with H. Rickards advertised insurance, real estate and loans, the Floyd sale yard, feed stables, and stock sheds.

W. Gladstone was a steamship agent at Sibley. Robert Grouse and Sydney Milne maintained a business partnership until the latter's death at Hot Springs. Herbert Cope, an old resident of China, sold tea specially selected and shipped to him directly by old friends in China and Japan, and for several years he was advertised to the public as "tea importer" so that English residents of the country could not have lacked their favorite afternoon beverage.

Maclagan, Warren, and Watson built a large sale yard and did a general commission business. James Brough Warren sold his Floyd Meat Market with its roast beef for Englishmen and went to Larchwood to take charge of the Sykes estate. A. W. Maitland served as Captain Moreton's private secretary. The English owners of the Le Mars Pork Packing House with a capacity of four hundred hogs a day were Roberts, Frost, and Heaphy, but for a time they killed on only one day a week. Mr. Frost, once a London "bobby", also shipped live stock and grain from Merrill. J. H. Grayson joined John Morgan in brick making. Leuric Charles Cobbe, Charles Eller, and Alfred H. Paget bought the soap factory of Frost

and Company and are said to have brought to the business "the vigor and sagacity and at the same time the conservative tendencies of the commercial classes of England where they received their training." The Le Mars Land and Stock Feeding Company was capitalized at \$125,000 with Captain Moreton as president in May, 1884, other Englishmen also taking stock.

Dr. J. Twidale began practice at Le Mars in March, 1882, his professional card reading: "Bachelor of Medicine, Master in Surgery, Licentiate in Midwifery, University of Edinburgh, Scotland." He does not appear to have tarried long; nor did Howard F. Deakin who arrived in the spring of 1884 as "barrister to practise". W. Thomson, a son of the Archbishop of York, after spending a while at Quorn Farm, decided to go into law at Sioux City. Somewhat later "an English C. Q. S. (1st class)" sought an engagement as tutor in a family for the winter. W. G. Harcourt Vernon began his career as bank cashier at Kingsley in 1884 and afterwards went to Sioux City. Charles Mylius entered a bank at Dalton, and afterwards owned the Sioux City Planing Mill before going back to the old family place on the shores of Lake Como, Italy. G. C. Maclagan and Henry J. Moreton worked as cashiers in the bank at Le Mars, the latter now being engaged in the

grain business at Minneapolis. A. C. Colledge, who also resides in the Flour City, still has a real estate, insurance, loan, and collection business in charge of Adair Colpoys at Le Mars.

Tom Dealtry, once a Moreton "pup", and later buyer of grain and stock at Maurice in Sioux County, is now with Woods Brothers at Sioux City; while his neighbor and former Rugby school-mate, Henry H. Drake, who worked a farm for several years, is now employed by Armour and Company. Percy E. Prescott, for many years a resident of Sioux County and popular starter of horse races at the annual fair, has in recent years owned and managed the Palace Dray Line at Sioux City. Richard Latham is a reporter on the *Sentinel* at Le Mars, where also Frederick K. Veal and G. A. C. Clarke of the early comers may still be found, the former owning a lumber yard.<sup>217</sup>



## XVII

### A STORY OF COAL

It is a well-known fact that the absence of two things in particular retarded the settlement of the open prairies of the Middle West: lack of fuel and lack of transportation. Although the larger streams and crude highways and timber lands enabled the pioneers to surmount these difficulties to some extent in eastern and southern Iowa, long hauls to market by wagon or by water left much to be desired until the railroads came. In the prairie counties of northwestern Iowa the earliest pioneers were compelled to set up their homes along or near the streams in order to have easy access to the scanty wood supply of the region, while later settlers made weary journeys to distant places for the fuel necessary to tide them over the bitter cold of winter.

The coming of a railroad changed all this; and when several roads of steel cut across the land, the problems of transportation and lack of fuel were largely solved together. In time the planting of groves upon the farmsteads also helped to produce a fair supply of firewood; but even so, the need of

cheaper coal than railroads could possibly bring from the Des Moines Valley or from Illinois was always present. Expensive fuel became a great drain on the resources of the farmers: mines right on the spot would mean greater prosperity for the farmers and rapid industrial development as well. Accordingly, it was not uncommon for county boards of supervisors to encourage the search for coal deposits. In Plymouth County the board made a standing offer of \$500 in 1873, \$1000 in 1875, and \$5000 in 1884 for the discovery of a paying coal mine.<sup>218</sup>

It was in the year 1880 that the Hon. Reynolds Moreton, captain for nine years of a British warship and brother of the Earl of Ducie, emigrated from England with his family and arrived in Le Mars with the fixed purpose to make the West his home. One mile northwest of town lay the farm of O. A. Moore. It so pleased the Captain's eye that he became the purchaser at what was then regarded as a fabulous figure — thirty-four dollars per acre. Perched on the most elevated spot of this farm stood a large, carefully cultivated grove, and within its shelter stood a neat little dwelling from which the owner could enjoy a commanding view of Le Mars and a landscape that stretched for miles up and down the valley of the Floyd River.

On this farm Captain Moreton soon erected a fine mansion and made extensive arrangements to go into stock raising: yards, sheds, and barns were built and everything put in shape for business. But there was one great drawback — a lack of water. Wells were dug and windmills raised without accomplishing satisfactory results. The Captain made up his mind that the only way to secure an abundant and constant supply was to sink an artesian well at any cost. Possessed of “a full quota of the proverbial tenacity and pluck of the typical Englishman”, the Captain in the spring of 1882 let a contract for the work.<sup>219</sup>

On the summit of the bluff in his stockyard, a derrick was raised, steam engines planted, and boring began. In due time the rumor spread that at a depth of 225 feet the contractor, Col. Strait, had struck a five-foot vein of coal, a big bonanza. The Captain insisted that the quantity had been overrated: it might be a pocket.<sup>220</sup> Needless to say, these doings at Dromore Farm merited newspaper mention, and “busy tongues whispered to willing ears” what they had learned on good authority. The solid, sensible men of the community, who had been through several mining sensations and had no faith in any such trumpery, “smiled sympathizingly at the ready credulity with which the story was received by gossips” —

they knew better. It was finally conceded, however, that at a depth of three hundred feet a three-foot vein had been perforated. Moreover, it was reported that analysis of a sample of the coal showed a larger percentage of carbon than any coal hitherto discovered in Iowa!<sup>221</sup>

Captain Moreton's attention was naturally diverted from water to coal. The twofold question in his mind and in the minds of many others could be none other than whether they had struck a mine or a mere pocket. While men still doubted, the signal for speculation had been sounded:

Capt. Moreton has ordered a diamond drill, a little instrument that cost \$3000.00 and the same is expected here shortly. A diamond drill is not a coal mine, but is useful in discovering veins of coal. It cuts its way downward, leaving a core of the earth or rock through which it passes in the center. This core is withdrawn with the drill and of course can be inspected at leisure. So far Capt. Moreton. J. W. Hoopes of Muscatine has leased the mineral rights of the following farms: Grotkin's 360; Payn's 280; Wood's 240; Balsinger's 80; Curtis' 80; Hackett & Hynes 160; Young 120; Sedgwick 40; Ruble 200 and another piece of 80 acres, making in all 1720 acres. Mr. H. left on Tuesday evening, very sanguine that inside of two years he would be supplying this northwestern region with coal from the Lemars mines. It is not certain whether he will prospect any this fall or wait till spring, by which



time we will be able to answer the conundrum: Have we a coal mine among us.<sup>222</sup>

Land near the shaft was soon reported as selling at from \$100 to \$300 per acre.<sup>223</sup>

Reference to White's geological survey of Iowa made in 1870 gave practically no encouragement to any belief in a true vein of workable coal in this region; but declaring that geologists didn't know everything, Captain Moreton began a second bore three-quarters of a mile northwest of the first. On March 1, 1883, the whole history of the enterprise was published to the world. Two paragraphs of this interesting bit of publicity deserve the reader's perusal:

From Nov. 27, 1882, till Feb. 23, 1883, a period of nearly three months, and in the face of desperate discouragements, the Captain and his faithful associate, Col. Strait, kept at work. As will be seen by the "log" which the Captain furnishes for publication herewith, a vein of three feet was struck at a depth of 188 feet, but this did not satisfy his Alexandrian ambition. The work was prosecuted for nearly another hundred feet, and the magnificent result secured which we herewith announce — a five foot vein, of the richest bituminous coal ever touched in Iowa.

Though searching eagerly for this very thing, its actual discovery rather took away the Captain's breath. We read that when Thales finally worked out the famous 47th proposition of the 1st Book of Euclid, after years of earnest toil, he felt so elated

that he sacrificed seventy fat oxen to the gods. It is also said of Archimedes, that when he thought out a means of discovering the cubic contents of Hiero's golden crown, he was so overcome that all he could do was to exclaim, Eureka. Now whether the Captain said or did anything that will warrant an allusion to these ancient duffers we cannot tell, but this we do know, that hundreds and thousands of others have indulged in exuberant hieroglyphics over his grand discovery, that make the classic utterances of these ancient philosophers sound stale and common place.<sup>224</sup>

Meanwhile, although public excitement had begun to lag, the confidence of the explorers had induced the Plymouth Coal Company to publish a notice of incorporation with \$10,000 of capital stock for the purpose of leasing, subleasing, and purchasing coal lands as well as prospecting, mining, and selling coal. The officers were J. F. Heeb, president; C. E. Corkery, secretary; H. F. Sugden, treasurer; and A. B. Ferris, general manager. Mr. Sugden quickly sold his share in the undertaking "for a handsome sum". The company pushed work on a mine on the Broken Kettle, hopeful but not over-sanguine.<sup>225</sup>

Owing to the fact that sensational tales were putting Captain Moreton's "good name, veracity and honor in the market" (some people being still convinced that lumps of coal had been dropped down the bore), that gentleman published the

official log of the second prospect bore on January 25th and the complete log on March 1st to silence wagging tongues. The local press lauded "the plucky Englishman" for solving the fuel question and, calling him "a brick", asserted: "It 'was faith, backed by John Bull grit and \$5000 that did it.'<sup>226</sup>

Two columns of newspaper space on the coal discovery and the report of widespread excitement show how the people of Le Mars and vicinity were being affected. Even though someone estimated that it would cost \$45,000 to sink a 289 foot shaft, unoccupied lands were withdrawn from the market in several counties and many began to prepare for prospecting. In June appeared a notice of the incorporation of the North-Western Coal and Mining Company with a capital stock of \$500,000 and the following directors: Captain the Hon. Reynolds Moreton, Henry J. Moreton, G. C. Maclagan, and M. J. Chapman.<sup>227</sup>

The coal mine fever continued to rage at white heat when C. P. Woodard found another rich five-foot vein in July. But mining had not yet commenced. In January, 1884, the log of Moreton's second boring was published. That the promoters really lacked capital was clear when they passed around a subscription contract and secured \$5000 for sinking a shaft. Captain and Mrs. Moreton

expressed their warmest thanks for donations made by the people, and the Captain wrote: "I trust that your confidence in myself personally, and in my discovery may not be misplaced." In a subsequent letter of thanks to the press, he added: "God has greatly blessed this county and country by giving wealth for man to develop. May it be ours to acknowledge him always, and help to enrich one another." The sinking of a shaft ten and a half by five and a half feet was begun on Dromore Farm in January, 1884, when Le Mars already boasted a "Manufacturers' Union".<sup>228</sup>

On the last day of February workers on the shaft had progressed eighty feet; within two weeks they were busy pumping water; and in August they were one hundred feet down. Subscribers to the shaft fund then held a meeting: eleven were in favor of requiring that the shaft be sunk 297 feet in accordance with Moreton's contract, while thirteen wanted their money refunded. Meanwhile M. T. Maher, a practical miner and prospector, had made a third boring and found only lignite that would not pay to work. For sixteen months he had been employed by the Captain whom he thanked for "his kindness, treatment and honorable dealing." This led to the abandonment of the whole project, but caused many people



to accuse the Captain of being a swindler and liar: they declared he took such a course to bring down the price of lands so that he might buy cheaply and then proceed to develop the find!

Captain Moreton answered his traducers by writing a history of the whole affair from beginning to end, asserting that he and his son had lost \$14,000 on the venture. And, moreover, why should subscribers to his shaft fund feel so badly? Had he not directly and indirectly brought \$250,000 of capital to the country? They met again in October and released him from his promise, but the story of the "Big Bonanza" lingered long in their memory.<sup>229</sup>

## XVIII

### GAMES AND SPORTS AMONG THE ENGLISH

Extremely novel to hard-working American settlers in Le Mars and the surrounding country were the games and sports which their English neighbors introduced. "All work and no play" could hardly be expected from the large number of young Britishers who had flocked from the civilization of England to participate in the reclamation of a wild, prairie region. Amusements and pleasures as old as the race were not easily relegated to the limbo of neglect with the coming of these people to the frontier. And so the forms of excitement and friendly rivalry so characteristic of English country life for generations were naturally perpetuated in a corner of the earth where everything else was in its infancy. This rejuvenating element must have gone far to mitigate the tedium of existence among strangers in a foreign land.

First of the contests which marked the Englishman's love for thrills was a fight between cocks representing Ireland and England, the former

winning: the affair promised to be a regular fixture on Saturdays when country folk commonly journeyed to town.<sup>230</sup> Coaching or tally-ho riding, too, became a feature of outdoor life among these people. A four-in-hand with someone winding the horn no doubt startled the rough Yankee settlers of those days and the short newspaper notice, "Lost between Merrill and Le Mars, an English Coach Horn", must have given readers at least a vision of one phase of life in the old country.<sup>231</sup>

But not until a considerable number of the "sprightly young fellows" had been stationed upon the farms in all directions from Le Mars did sporting life take on the aspect of first-class importance. Early in the year 1881 the season opened with a paper chase on horseback. Announcement of the event invited Americans to participate. The start was made from Captain Moreton's farm at four o'clock in the afternoon: Fred Close and Blake as hares started east, strewing bits of finely cut paper from large bags. Ten minutes later the hounds set out on the trail to overtake and capture the leaders. Messrs. Campbell, Dacres, Dodsworth, Gaskell, Oswell, Revell, Richards, Todrich, and Walker followed the scent of the hares who "with the cunning of their tribe curved and doubled over the South side and around the Cemetery, but one of them was overhauled on the homestretch by

Willie Gaskell." These paper chases, almost as exciting as fox hunts, usually occurred in the spring or fall and started from the farms of different English owners.<sup>232</sup>

One Thanksgiving day H. N. Waller, Cecil Benson, and A. B. Jones with their hounds sighted a magnificent buck on the banks of the Little Sioux and triumphantly brought in a head of twelve points.<sup>233</sup> Sometimes the Le Mars wolf hounds met for an afternoon's sport in the country six or seven miles west of town; and in honor of the wedding of James B. Close and Miss Humble at Pipestone, Minnesota, the English boys of Sibley and Le Mars were reported as "coming up with a deer and some hounds" for an old-fashioned stag hunt. And it is recorded that H. M. Lord went to Wisconsin on a big bear hunt.<sup>234</sup>

One writer in England pictured the Le Mars colonists in a most alluring way:

Fortunately, the open-air life is a healthful one. The absence of good turf is the only thing which so far has prevented much progress being made with cricket and football. But a man may be less pleasantly employed than in riding over the prairie through the lanes of flowers — sunflowers if he likes them! — or in herding and driving cattle in the summer months, while there is fair quail or prairie chicken shooting in the autumn, and duck or wild goose as the winter begins and ends. Nor with so large a number of



fellow-countrymen within reach is it possible to lack a congenial friend in time of need.<sup>235</sup>

Soon after this story appeared, the national pastime of cricket was introduced to the citizens of Le Mars. Old cricketers who had been members of crack elevens back home sent their names to Fred Paley, so that a match between picked teams might be arranged. The boys practised some "down on the Broken Kettle and at Quorn, just to keep their hands in." On July 1, 1881, a cricket club was organized and the following officers elected: president, Capt. R. Moreton; vice president, F. R. Price; secretary, F. Paley; committee, J. Wakefield, F. Horsburgh, H. Hillyard, G. Maclagan, C. Benson, G. Garnett, J. Brockbank, R. Walker. A match game was played the following day on grounds near the brick yard north of town. The event was well advertised in order that Americans, "besides being able to witness a new and manly sport, might see how keenly our English cousins enter the very spirit of the game."<sup>236</sup>

In their enthusiasm for a game which in England was played in immaculate white shirts, trousers, and shoes, the English presented a sharp contrast to their American cousins in a struggle on the baseball field. Cricket matches became a frequent thing. Captain the Hon. R. Moreton's eleven several times took defeat at the hands of the Le

Mars eleven. On one side appeared Preston, H. Moreton, Sutton, Dealtry, Stubbs, Captain Moreton, Johnson, Douglas, Kirwan, and Jervis and Colledge as bowlers; on the other, R. Walker, T. Oswell, Clowes, Wakefield, Brockbank, Maclagan, McPherson, H. A. Watson, J. G. Watson, and Horsburgh and Grouse as bowlers. With a baseball game and a shooting match going on while the English indulged in their favorite pastime, Le Mars must have been a very lively place on certain days.<sup>237</sup> A friendly encounter arranged especially for the visiting Lord Harris, a famous cricketer, had to be called off on account of extreme heat as well as rain.<sup>238</sup> At one time the boys from Akron and West Fork defeated the Le Mars eleven. The most interesting match, perhaps, was that between Le Mars and St. Paul. The following account of the game appeared later:

The cricket match between the Gateway team and that of St. Paul came off last Monday on the grounds of the latter club, and resulted in an easy victory for our boys. The grounds were in splendid condition, and nothing could exceed the hospitality of the home team, who had provided refreshments on the ground and an omnibus to take the visiting eleven and spectators to and from the grounds. The St. Paul men won the toss, and Messrs. Ramsey and Davidson were sent to defend the wicket against the bowling of Messrs. Horsburgh and Farquhar, with the score at

1. Ramsey was clean bowled and Davidson failed to score — in fact the only man who could do anything with the Gateway bowlers was Mr. Pardoe, who played a plucky innings for 10 and 12, the innings closed for 30. The battery of the home team was weak, and the scoring throughout small. This, no doubt, was owing to the good bowling of Messrs. Horsburgh and Farquhar. Mr. Harry Clowes' wicket keeping was beyond all praise, and the fielding of the visitors was remarkably good considering the little practice they have had this season. After an interval of ten minutes Messrs. Golightly and Payne defended the wicket for Lemars. Both gentlemen played carefully, and with the score at 22 Payne was caught. Here an adjournment was made for refreshments. After the inner man had been refreshed Clowes succeeded Payne and showed some fine batting. Golightly was caught after playing a fruitless innings for 25. Horsburgh, Sinclair and Jervis augmented the score by 15, 18 and 10 respectively, and the innings closed with a total of 116. Messrs. Dinwoodie and Ramsey bowled well for St. Paul, and the fielding of Messrs. Pardoe and Myron was particularly noticeable.

In the second innings for St. Paul the Minnesota men were dismissed with a total of 59, the Gateway team thus winning the match by an innings and 27 runs. A dinner was given in the evening at Hurds to the visitors, Dr. Macdonald, the organizer of the St. Paul club, presiding. The boys speak in glowing terms of the kindness and hospitality shown to them while at St. Paul and hope ere long to return the compliment by receiving a visit in Lemars from the north-



ern eleven, by whom they were so royally entertained.

Myron was captain for the St. Paul team, and Price captain for Lemars. The umpires were Vernon, Lemars, and Bethune for St. Paul. Many ladies witnessed the game.<sup>239</sup>

At another time a team composed of Sibley and Le Mars men beat Minneapolis, Messrs. Jervis, Dealtry, Croft, and Wakefield receiving most of the glory. That cricket was still being played in 1887 is clear from the fact that the Cricket Club's bats and balls were stolen — articles "of little or no value to anyone in this country and a robbery of this kind shows more than is common the viciousness of some of our rising citizens."<sup>240</sup>

If cricket science could not be appreciated by persons unfamiliar with it, horse racing was quite a different matter. The fondness of Englishmen for this sport was so great that they organized the Le Mars Jockey Club with an annual membership fee of \$10 and arranged for races at least twice a year. Their June races were always widely advertised: for weeks horse talk could be heard on the streets and in hotel lobbies. The English boys or "whips" were sure to get their flyers in training early for each "grand equestrian tournament". Entries were made at the office of the secretary, Fred Paley, and the books were closed several days before the races came off. Every year, be-



ginning in 1880, when the races were held on Captain Laing's grounds, the Le Mars Derby was one of the finest racing events in northern Iowa.<sup>241</sup>

In the spring of 1881 about fifty horses were said to be in training and Americans were informed that "our English sportsmen are in high feather over the approaching contest." A grand stand capable of accommodating a large audience was erected on the grounds at a cost of \$1000. Excursion trains at low rates were arranged to lure visitors from St. Paul, Chicago, Omaha, and intermediate points. Some were enthusiastic enough to believe that with encouragement from the citizens of Le Mars the June races would soon bear the same relation to the West that the Rochester course did to the East. The English colonists made all the preparations for a great field day; hotel keepers anticipated the rush of business "by getting out their extra cots and looking up their surplus china"; several hundred invitations were issued to an evening dancing party to be given by the Close brothers; and the first game of cricket ever played in the Northwest was scheduled for the day after the races. Interest in the event increased with the announcement that the English had just received direct from Europe a thoroughbred racer, raised by Lord Falmouth and valued at \$25,000.<sup>242</sup>

On the morning of June 30th the streets of Le Mars presented a circus-day appearance. "Red caps and blue caps, green caps and yellow, could be seen filing through the crowds, noise and confusion was apparent on every hand, and Le Mars looked very like a city of the first class rather than the third." Le Mars newspapers declared that the meeting would long be remembered as one of the most stirring days in the history of the city, the races were "second to none in the Union", and such a scene as people witnessed on the course could "certainly not be duplicated anywhere west of the herring pond."

The scene was pictured as "brilliant in the extreme, the throng of people, the vehicles of all kinds, the brilliant costumes of the ladies, the driving, the riding, the music, the fighting, the gambling, the drink, the mounted police, the unmounted, ditto; the jockeys, the 'let-her-roll' of the man at the wheel, (you were not forbidden to speak to this one) all made up a lively panorama that only Le Mars and the English Races can produce. You could back your fancy to any figure you pleased, and the book-makers called the odds in the most approved race-course fashion." The following account may be taken as typical of the way in which the Le Mars Derby was reported for a number of years:

Thursday, the 30th of June, was as beautiful a day as the most ardent friend of the English races could wish for. The way the crowds poured into the Gateway the night before and all forenoon of that day showed that the Lemars turf is rapidly acquiring a popularity that extends far beyond the limits of north-western Iowa. Representatives from the St. Paul and Chicago press proved that the great metropolitan dailies regard the Lemars meeting of sufficient importance to demand their attention, and though the dispatches they furnished their respective journals were brief, they were both pointed and enthusiastic. Special trains were run on all the roads leading to Lemars, each bringing its contingent of admirers of the manly sport. From Sibley and Sheldon came about fifty or sixty, from Cherokee and intervening stations nearly a hundred, and from Sioux City not far from four hundred visitors, to witness and participate in the day's festivities.

The race course was in most excellent condition — firm as a rock, smooth as a floor and dustless as my lady's boudoir.

By one o'clock the grounds presented

*An Animated Spectacle.*

The grand stand, just completed the day before, and through which the cooling breeze playfully filtered, was filled to repletion with an anxious, good natured and well-dressed assemblage. Scores of elegant turn-outs were driving leisurely across and around the park. Hundreds on hundreds of men, women and children surged hither and thither. Lemonade stands, refreshment booths, and the inevitable hazard tables



were surrounded by throngs anxious to slake their thirst, or make a fortune. Brilliantly costumed riders dashed hither and thither either to test the mettle of their steeds or convey important messages relating to the pending contest. The betting men, with hands filled with greenbacks, pencil and cards, added to the hubbub, by offering to wager in any conceivable way. The whole made up a panorama of life, activity and sportive energy never before seen on any race course in this region. Conspicuous everywhere was the omnipresent Englishman, to whom a horse-race is the sum total of human enjoyment. The ladies, too, English and American were present in force, their elegant toilets adding picturesqueness to the scene, and their sparkling eyes showing how intensely they were interested in the proceedings.<sup>243</sup>

Fully one thousand people were said to be on the grounds when the race for the West Fork plate was called at one o'clock. This was a mile run for horses owned by English residents and ridden by English gentlemen. Of nine contenders for two prizes of \$30 and \$10, C. Eller's "Zoe" won first and F. B. Close's "True" won second, Grayson's "Bacchus" being third. Next came a half-mile running race of seven ponies owned by Englishmen: the first prize of \$20 went to A. Ridgeway's "Fred Wilson", and the second of \$5 to Mr. Grouse's "Lady Grace". The Hail Columbia Stakes called out only two steeds, the property of American citizens: "Kitchen Maid"



won \$50 for J. C. Kennedy and "Little Harry" \$10 for W. M. Blunt. A second pony event for a prize of \$25 open to Englishmen and Americans was won by the former.

The Le Mars cup race of one mile and a half over six flights of hurdles, the main event of the day, was open to all comers. In a field of seven entries the prize of \$70 went easily to an American horse, "Sunbeam", ridden by Willie Gaskell, an English jockey, Langdon's "Lena" earning second money, and W. B. Close's "Petrarch", winner of the previous year, finishing third. Farquhar's "Speculation" flew the track at the third hurdle and threw its rider without hurting him much. The victor was loudly cheered by the men who had bet against him as well as by his backers, the jockey "winning golden opinions by the choice way in which he got away".

Lovers of horseflesh were afterwards reminded of the fact that the year 1881 had proven extremely lucky for Americans: "Iroquois" won the Epsom Derby, "Foxhall" scooped the Parisian Grand Prix, and "Sunbeam" carried the day at Le Mars.

The sixth race was a trotting match between the horses of M. Blomefield and F. B. Close, the latter winning an easy first. In the International Scurry of one mile on the flat, open to all,

“Kitchen Maid” triumphed with F. Paley’s “Ned” second. Spectators voted the Le Mars Derby a great success: the races were put on in a masterly way and fairly conducted; “there was none of the bickering that has done so much to bring the noble sport into disrepute; everything went off smoothly and swiftly, without useless delays while judges jangled with jockeys; and losers made no outward sign of grief.” Some men, of course, allowed enthusiasm to get the better of their judgment and put up their money on the wrong horse.<sup>244</sup>

Horsemanship was an accomplishment of which nearly all the colonists could boast, men and women alike. Thus, on one occasion Mrs. Fred Paley, “skilled equestrienne like nearly all English ladies”, was injured while riding. It is said that the only Fourth of July feature which attracted Englishmen at Le Mars was horse racing. Also, whenever the Plymouth County Agricultural Society held its annual fair in September, they could be depended on to enter their horses: at one time Fred Close rode a race over three flights of hurdles, and despite a bad spill beat Jack Wakefield on W. B. Close’s “Petrarch”, Mr. Eden on J. B. Close’s gray mare, and F. C. S. Dodsworth on Fred Barrow’s horse. Autumn races gained almost as much popularity as the June Derby: on

October 6 and 7, 1881, English horses owned mostly by the Close brothers triumphed in all except the main event, the hurdle race for the House of Lord's Cup valued at \$150. As Yankee horses had swept the English turf to the amazement of John Bull, so "our cousins got left last Saturday in a way they despise."<sup>245</sup>

There can be little point in referring to all the semi-annual meetings of the English Jockey Club in the years that followed: newspapers faithfully lent their columns to lengthy reports of those exciting red letter days in June and October when only horses held the center of the stage for Americans and Englishmen alike. In June, 1882, the Grand International Hurdle Race of two miles over eight flights of barriers excited the most intense interest: W. Clowes's "Badger" with Jack Wakefield in the saddle beat Cecil Benson on H. Gunner's "Sportsman" in three minutes and twenty-five seconds, two other flyers having bolted before the finish. Waddilove, Payne, and W. Gladstone captured a good bit of money in later years.

Sometimes races were arranged on the spur of the moment, as when James Close beat his brother, Fred, in August, 1882; and sometimes horses were matched to run for special side bets or purses. Sometimes English horses also appeared in races

elsewhere, as at the Woodbury County fair in Sioux City, Council Bluffs, or Chicago, where R. Jervis's "Nippon" won \$250; and in September, 1884, they were invited by Fred B. Close to the Pipestone Jockey Club's first meeting.<sup>246</sup>

Although horse racing proved to be the most spectacular form of excitement from the onlooker's point of view, other sports furnished the participants an opportunity to match their physical skill and strength. The Le Mars Athletic Club was soon formed. Many times the English boys showed their prowess in athletic sports: at the county fair in 1881 they held a field tourney and track meet, each person paying fifty cents for entering an event and the winner obtaining a cup as the prize. Handicap races, as for members of the Prairie Club over thirty years of age, were popular affairs. One year later, at the October meeting of the Le Mars Jockey Club they staged another program of running and field events in which the following men took part: A. C. Colledge, D. G. Phenhallagan, J. Hope, C. L. Robertson, J. B. Close, Capt. Robinson, C. H. Golightly, F. Payne, L. H. Collins, M. Farquhar, F. S. Jennings, J. Black, and A. H. Paget.<sup>247</sup>

The game of lacrosse was also played with spirit;<sup>248</sup> and ice hockey must have offered a surfeit of sport during the long winter months. At



Adams's rink the boys of Seney matched their wits against a team from Le Mars and won a series; and city versus country also provoked the keenest rivalry.<sup>249</sup> Nor were friendly encounters on the lawn tennis court neglected: cricket and tennis were played on alternate Saturdays in 1882; and five years later the Le Mars Lawn Tennis Club prepared for the tournament at Spirit Lake and planned a club house.<sup>250</sup>

Unfortunately no stream or body of water at or near Le Mars was adequate enough to satisfy the craving of the English for boat racing. In July, 1884, a score of English ladies and gentlemen whiled away some time at Spirit Lake which had already acquired a reputation as a summer resort. The English visitors made themselves conspicuous by appearing at dinner in full evening dress and also by putting on some exciting boat races. The Hon. R. C. Jervis beat A. C. Colledge in the single sculls; J. M. C. Walkinshaw and Jervis defeated J. Dawson and Colledge in the double sculls; and the big event in which four double sculls were entered was won by F. E. Romanes and Jervis over A. C. and A. R. Colledge, Lord Hobart and J. Dawson, and C. F. Benson and J. M. C. Walkinshaw, ladies coxing the boats. So great was A. C. Colledge's fondness for the sport that in the autumn of 1884 he returned to England

to train with his old rowing club at Henley for the championship of the world.<sup>251</sup>

It is alleged that Fred B. Close, who came to America in 1872, was the first polo player in the United States. If that claim can not be substantiated, he it was who introduced the game at Le Mars and organized the Northwestern Polo League in 1885, other clubs being formed at Blair and Omaha, Nebraska, at Yankton and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and at Onawa, Cherokee, Sioux City, Salix, Sloan, and Council Bluffs in Iowa. The association's challenge cup was three times won by Le Mars.

Cow ponies proved themselves very adept, alert, and intelligent companions to their riders in this game; but in a match between Sioux City and Le Mars in June, 1890, there was a collision or rather an attempt by one pony to hurdle another which cut across its path, resulting in the death of the Sioux City captain, Fred B. Close. The unfortunate man had but recently returned from England with a shoulder badly bruised in hunting — with upper arm strapped to his body and only the hand free to drive, he was unable to manage his mount well enough to avoid the accident which led to his death before the eyes of Mrs. Close. Among the participants in this contest at Crescent Park, Sioux City, were Jack Watson, A. C. Colledge, G.

C. Maclagan, and Count von Mueller for Le Mars and Henry Drake for Sioux City. Polo in this region lasted until the year 1898 by which time Britishers had been pretty well displaced by younger American players whom they had well tutored in this as in all other lines of sport. Thus, in the match between Le Mars and St. Louis in 1893 G. C. Maclagan's American team-mates were Ed Dalton and the Sammis brothers.<sup>252</sup>

Rugby football also served as an outlet for surplus energy among the English colonists. The boys at West Fork or Quorn challenged all comers in the autumn of 1881, and a big game was scheduled for November 19th. At another time Moreton's "pups", old and new, played the Le Mars club; and in connection with the races in October, 1882, a most exciting game occurred between Le Mars and a picked team from West Fork and Akron.

It was also reported that football as played by our English cousins resembled "for all the world an Arkansas rough-and-tumble free fight", and accidents were by no means uncommon. G. C. Maclagan was thrown at one time and received a fractured collar bone, which, like a dislocated joint, a newspaper reporter declared to be "a heavy price to pay for a game." The description of one thrilling match between the two teams



above referred to may well be taken as a typical English account of "rugger":

The Gateway team on Saturday avenged their defeats of six months ago. The visiting team was voted a good one but the absence of such men as Crawley, Garnett, Benson shook the faith of many persons as to the ability of the "Portlands" to pull through victorious. About 150 spectators assembled to witness the struggle, the fairer sex mustering in very good force. Only twelve men a side could be mustered and as soon as the preliminaries of the match were arranged the United team turned their backs to the wind and Paget, kicking off, started the game at twelve minutes after four. Walkinshaw was at once called upon to handle the leather and made a good run but on being collared by Paget passed cleverly to Thomson, who, however, was stopped by Colledge. The first scrimmage was formed in the city limits but the home forwards loosing out took the ball by a series of short rushes to the half way flag. Soon after this Osmanston made a splendid run and succeeded in gaining a try, the place by Paget proving a failure. After the drop out F. Close got away with the ball and made a rare run passing to Waddilove who nearly got in but was well tackled by J. D. Chiene within 20 feet of the city's goal line. A splendid rush by the Lemars forwards led by Farquhar and Colledge made matters look better for their side and the play was transferred to midfield. Here Walkinshaw made a brilliant run, and the Cheshireman was only held and that after a great exertion by Paget within a few yards of the goal line. Unfortunately in the fall



Walkinshaw was so much injured as to place him "hors de combat." The united team, now weakened by the loss of the valuable services of their captain, lost ground steadily, the game being principally contested from this point up to half time in the visitors' quarters.

Ends were now changed and after an interval of five minutes Hewett kicked off on behalf of Portland, Colledge with one of his powerful runs taking the leather into the enemy's quarters. At this point another of the visitors, A. Grey, retired, and although fighting against odds the united team seemed determined to score playing fast and loose in the scrimmage, Hewett and Christian being particularly conspicuous but the home  $\frac{1}{2}$  backs, Paget and Osmanton's brilliant runs drove them back, and soon after Paget gained a try goal. The ball had no sooner been started from the centre than Colledge and Rollo put in some fine play, and the last named, passing to Paget, the home team's  $\frac{1}{2}$  back, effected a fine run in, securing a try, but the place by Colledge failed. Waddilove and Capt. Robinson put in some fine work after this, but Lemars carried the scrimmages and A. Paget cleverly obtained a try which he easily converted into a goal. The visitors starting again with a splendid kick off by Hewett, paid a short visit to the city quarters, where a series of scrimmages took place in dangerous proximity to the goal line. No point of interest occurred up to the call of time, when Lemars was declared the winners by two goals, two tries, to nil.

## TEAMS — LEMARS

J. D. Chiene, back; A. C. Colledge, E. Rollo, three-quarter backs; Osmanston, A. Paget, one-half backs; Brown, A. C. Sinclair, Sturgess, H. Tarleton, A. J. Colledge, J. G. Hope, Ed Anderson, forwards.

## WEST FORK AND AKRON

D. Maclaren, back; J. Walkinshaw, A. C. Waddilove, three-quarter backs; Capt. Robinson, F. Close, one-half backs; C. Hewett, E. Mansel, Thomson, P. Wraight, H. Christian, A. Grey, W. W. Figgis, W. H. Stevens, forwards.<sup>253</sup>

Although young Britishers were not as plentiful in and about Le Mars in later years, one of the most enjoyed occasions during their sojourn was the long-planned celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee in June, 1887 — seven days being devoted to the great event. On the second day came the Derby at the fair grounds, with the men dressed "in jockey caps, flaring scarlet shirts, and black knickerbockers on their high-mettled horses." English ladies drove through the streets, according to one description, "in queer little carts, or, if on foot, they invariably carry canes and are followed by a parcel of dogs, generally small grey hounds. The English flag floats everywhere, English airs are tooted and drummed in all directions, and the English accent is heard on every hand."<sup>254</sup>

Two thousand people, British and Americans, turned out to see the pony races, the jubilee handi-

cap of six furlongs on the flat, and the West Fork plate which Fred Close won riding his own horse. With more races on two other days, including a tandem race with six entries, the Jockey Club was reported as having had the best day in its history. There was also a "tug of war" between England and Ireland: A. C. Colledge, E. Nesfield, F. Veal, E. Sturgess, H. Hawtrey, and Fred Close versus J. T. Mahan, C. Sinclair, Tom Dowglass, D. Johnson, D. Warren, and S. Dundas, the latter winning. Then a similar event took place between Americans and Scotchmen, "the Highlanders", A. Weir, Albert Farquhar, Guy Elliott, R. Reade, and F. Carmichael losing. In the final tug between the winners the Americans beat the Irish.

The polo match for the championship of the Northwest afforded lots of excitement: Captain Orde, Carmichael, W. Gaskell, and Fred Close for Sibley versus Captain Maclagan, Watson, Henry Moreton, and O. T. Pardoe for Le Mars, the latter winning three to one. There was also a tennis tournament in both singles and doubles with the following entries: A., J., and W. Farquhar, J. F. Carver, J. Douglas, A. Dent, E. Winstanley, A. H. Paget, H. Eller, A. C. Colledge, Tom Aldersey, R. Walker, W. Payne, Logan, and F. E. Romanes, Joe Farquhar winning the singles. Two cricket matches between Le Mars and visiting Britishers

were won by the visitors Drake, Payne, Scougel, Croft, Sinclair, Medd, Wesfield, Logan, Graham, Eustace, Tiffney, Paget, and A. Farquhar. With a grand ball at Apollo Hall, the week's jubilee festivities were voted a brilliant success, and may be taken as a fitting conclusion of the account of their doings on the playgrounds of northwestern Iowa.<sup>255</sup>



## XIX

### SALOONS AND OTHER THINGS AMERICAN

To mitigate the tedium of existence in the first years of any newly opened region, saloons in considerable numbers played a rough but very important part. Le Mars was no exception to the rule; and during the first few years of the English occupation saloons were named especially to attract Englishmen, such as the "House of Lords", the "House of Commons", and "Windsor Palace". In a letter to the editor of a local newspaper, as early as June, 1880, the writer asked if "something cannot be done to abate that miserable nuisance styled the 'House of Lords'." Going home from church on Sunday, he had seen twelve drunken young men in front of the place and through the open door he saw a number of women inside "jerking' drinks for the ungodly loafers who were reveling there". The editor replied:

The House of Lords has already won an unsavory reputation, and we hope that its flagrant violation of all law and all decency will be the cause of its speedy

collapse . . . . Why, the Liberal has been taken to task . . . . because it mentions the drunken sprees of the silly English lads who have come over here to get from under parental restraint.

Seven of these boys were alleged to have marched through town and jokingly to have broken the lamp which stood in front of the Methodist Church, "howling, yelping, singing, cursing, and otherwise scandalising this community". A few days later, four of the "blatant, mouthy young lads whose sense of decency and propriety has been sadly damaged in their making" called on the editor to get an apology and threatened "to bust his bloody blarsted head" if he refused. In an attempt to carry out the threat on the street one day, the editor was rescued by three business men from Jack Wakefield who had been delegated to trounce him with a horse whip. Not long afterward someone wrote that, save for the howling and carousing of the young bloods, the town had been remarkably quiet for some time past; but like Baltimore roughs or New York rats, they had given Le Mars a goodly portion of vice and revelry, and fear was expressed that a repetition of the occurrence "would end only in a young Bunker Hill".<sup>256</sup>

Under the headline, "War between the Races", a Sioux City newspaper referred to the troubles

at Le Mars. Speaking of the large number of young Englishmen there, it added:

They are "gentlemen's" sons, have plenty of money, a superabundance of animal spirits, and being a thousand miles away from home and among strangers, go in for what with them constitutes a "good time", with little regard to what people generally may think of their actions. They accept as a literal fact that this is the "land of the free", and are disposed to govern themselves accordingly. At Le Mars they have carried this principle so far, that the *Liberal* has on several occasions chided them in no endearing terms, and its issue of this week goes for the "drunken thugs", as it is pleased to call the young Britons in severe style. The charges preferred embrace about all the sins enumerated in the decalogue, and the paper has assumed to be speaking the sentiment of an outraged community.<sup>257</sup>

The two newspapers of Le Mars seem to have taken opposite sides on the matter, the editors having no love for each other, as one may gather from this scathing bit of journalism:

The terrific swagger, and fierce know-nothing bulldozing with which C. F. Leidy of the *Liberal*, tried to snuff out the English Colonists of this county a year ago stands in painful contrast to the ineffable toadyism with which he is now fawning at their feet. It will be remembered that his outrageous calumnies of the new comers caused a few of them to pick him up one morning in front of Allison's drug store, and

give him such a trouncing that it took ten days of lotions, liniments, pills and plasters to recuperate his exhausted energies. The licking had the effect of transforming the rampageous bull-dog to a whining spaniel, so that now instead of tearing the "cussed furriners," to pieces, he is their most unctuous sycophant. Leidy does not seem to understand, that to any well balanced mind, a bully and a parasite are equally detestable, and that Englishmen are proverbially intolerant of both. Their scorn for a vapor-ing blusterer is only equalled by their contempt for a servile lick-spittle.<sup>258</sup>

The "House of Lords" with its imported liquor, English ale and porter, and a special locker-room served as a sort of noisy club house for the younger Englishmen. The story goes that the first rural telephone in Plymouth County connected Captain Moreton's barn and this saloon for the special accommodation of his pupils; and that on one occasion Jack Wakefield, to be served at the bar in true Wild West style, rode a pony into the "House of Lords". That these boys sometimes encountered the opposition of Yankees of their own age is evident from the following newspaper account:

A Young Englishman and a couple of chaps from the country got up a good sized show on Tuesday afternoon. They had all been taking budge promiscuously, when one of the country lads thought to make it interesting by giving the Englishman a clip



behind the lug, which he proceeded to do, and then lit out at a 2:40 gait. The Englishman followed to the street, but got hold of the other chap and warmed his ears with a pair of beer mugs. Then there was a flight to a saloon and a three-cornered bombardment of beer glasses and knuckles ensued, after which there was another retreat, and the pale air was streaked with cuss-words, while the claret flowed freely down the necks of the combatants. No arrests.<sup>259</sup>

The agitation in Iowa caused by the prohibition question early in the year 1882 roused violent debate at Le Mars because it was freely predicted that prohibition would "knock the hind-sights off of immigration" to the State — an objection which "the goody-good people who want to transmogrify our State into a grand, perennial Sunday-school ought to think of".<sup>260</sup> If the amendment to the Constitution should carry, rumor prophesied that the English would take their departure. Prohibition won the day in Iowa as a whole and also at Le Mars, "a whiskey town" with fifteen saloons.<sup>261</sup> When the district court at Davenport declared the amendment unconstitutional in October, 1882, and the Supreme Court affirmed that decision in January, 1883, great rejoicing prevailed in certain quarters at Le Mars and saloons were again freely patronised. It was on this occasion that Charles Dacres, English editor of the *Lemars Truth*, wrote in serio-comic vein:

Are you allowed to talk on the streets at night? is a question I would like to have solved: The other evening on the closing of the House of Lords, I was standing with four or five friends talking when the deputy marshal comes up and requests me in his usually suave manner to "cheese this racket."

Liberty is constantly jammed down your throat here, but it seems to me an exploded theory, when an officer can do what he likes with your right of speech. Talking, I should think, is not a crime in the eyes of the law, unless the noise disturbs the sleep of others and the blizzard that was blowing on this particular night would have drowned even J. C. Morris' stentorian vocal organs.<sup>262</sup>

Saloons were later closed in accordance with the prohibitory statute of 1884; but the "House of Lords" was afterwards accused of violating the law.<sup>263</sup>

That many American ways and institutions rubbed English colonists against the grain there is little doubt. Fourth of July celebrations and American spread-eagles found no favor among them; and when some of the bolder young fellows attempted to raise the English flag on Independence Day, it is said, a good-sized riot or worse was narrowly averted. Another thing that caused these people to marvel at the time of an election for school directors was the fact that Americans were "always voting for somebody". When

British residents became naturalized and exercised the privilege of voting, a large majority affiliated with the Democratic Party because Republicans were not popular in England.<sup>264</sup>

What must have been particularly foreign to English tastes was the American newspaper of the region with its lack of foreign news and humor and its abundance of sensations and gossipy "personals". Accordingly, they subscribed for the *London Times* and *Punch* and other papers, tried and true. Herbert Cope, the colony's tea importer, presented a Le Mars editor with copies of these English journals from time to time which caused that gentleman to write for the benefit of his readers:

They present no peculiarity aside from their sombre and stately demeanor, if we may so express ourself. An English paper looks so solemn as an owl, never indulges in levity, and is always as dignified as a judge delivering a charge. Even their comic papers have a quaint, heavy, solemn look that almost discourages the lithesome, rattleheaded American whose intellectual viands must be served up in gilded goblets so to say, and yield their essence at a glance.<sup>265</sup>

Despite the fact that the newspapers at Le Mars gathered and published information relating to the colonists individually and collectively, thus enabling them to keep in touch with one another even if they did so by means of frequent and in-

timate social relations, Englishmen in this region soon came to have an organ of their own. Charles E. Dacres, who had gained some experience as an amateur journalist on board a British man-of-war, first issued what he named *The Indian Creek Gazette*. In February, 1882, he came to Le Mars and began taking subscriptions for *The Colony Sketch*. When it came from the press, an American editor described it as "a daisy in full bloom", "a creditable and spicy little sheet", and wished it success. Featuring especially Mrs. Paley's sketches and "Mercator's" letters, the paper circulated most among the English whom it was designed to interest and amuse.<sup>266</sup>

The youthful editor in one issue propounded and answered at great length the all-important question whether Englishmen should invest their money in northwestern Iowa: he cautioned his countrymen against tackling too much land or squandering their wealth on costly homes, and suggested larger expenditures on all kinds of live stock. From this attempt to do his bit as an economist and financial adviser he turned his attention fearlessly to civic ideals at Le Mars:

It is a highly discreditable fact that the alleys of Lemars are in a disgusting condition. Many of them are blockaded with filth, from which arises malaria in diverse forms, to say nothing of the offensive



smells that come therefrom, and the obstruction to the passage of vehicles and pedestrians. The attention of the council has been called to this matter heretofore, and it is time that something be done.<sup>267</sup>

This editorial found so much favor with an American editor that the city hall crowd was treated to the following outburst of newspaper sarcasm:

Fie, fie on you Mr. Sketch. Don't you know that we have a reform council, and a reform mayor and that everything is done that ought to be done, and whatever is not done is omitted in accordance with the grand underlying ideas that grandly underlie reforms and reformers? "Filth," "malaria," and "offensive smells," are all right provided they are reform "filth," reform "malaria," and reform "smells." In city matters we are enjoying simple "reform;" in county matters, it is "whisky, oysters and reform." Go easy, Mr. Sketch. Speak reverently of the local powers that be—for they are all "reform."

The name of the English paper underwent another change before the year 1882 ended: its American rival in the field welcomed *The Lemars Truth* as follows:

Mr. Dacres has associated with him R. E. Bradley in the editorial management. Of Mr. B. we know nothing, but Charlie Dacres swings a lively and pungent quill, which insures a spicy paper . . . . We wish it abundant success.<sup>268</sup>

Due to failing health Charles Dacres announced the discontinuance of his venture after ten months' publication. The subsequent career of Dacres, while not brilliant, was at least lurid to a high degree. He celebrated his twenty-sixth birthday by having his "friends in" to help. As a member of "The Wide Awake Hose Company", while extinguishing a fire, he fell from the roof and suffered injuries that kept him in bed a considerable time. He is also credited with having been editor of *The Lemars World* and *The Mirror*.<sup>269</sup>

After thirty-one attempts had been made to lay the town in ashes and Le Mars had suffered \$100,000 in fire losses in two years, suspicion pointed to young Dacres: indeed, while serving as editor of *The Globe*, he was arrested, indicted for arson, tried, and acquitted. And upon being accused by *The Sentinel* of defending "theft and rascality as well as bumnerism", he retaliated by bringing an action for libel for \$5000. This only led the defendant to take another thrust at "the pure and spotless Dacres", and when Mrs. Dacres' name was dragged into the scandal two years later, the young man went to the editor in good temper and declared that the newspaper had done his wife a great injustice: he admitted he had been wild in his time, but claimed that Mrs. Dacres had stood by him with a loyalty commanding admiration,

and had always been an influence with him for good.

In the summer of 1887 Dacres, as editor of *The Globe*, issued a daily journal during the week's celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee.<sup>270</sup>

## XX

### SOCIAL LIFE: THE PRAIRIE CLUB

Social life in the English colony does not seem to have suffered seriously from the fact that its participants, trained in the best traditions of England, had been transplanted to a frontier country. Their workaday duties as farmers and business men did not prevent them, however widely scattered throughout several counties, from continuing the customs and habits so thoroughly acquired in Old England. Although they never attained any startling numerical strength as compared with their American neighbors, the English made their presence felt in no uncertain way. Those who cut themselves off from their countrymen in northwestern Iowa must have felt like exiles among strangers and life to them must have lacked the sunshine of sociability: they could not enjoy the priceless advantage of being among people of their own tastes and home associations. It is well known how young Englishmen have adapted themselves to all sorts of conditions in every part of the world; but whether they maintained their



reputation in that respect in Iowa there are at least some reasons to doubt.

One of the most flourishing social institutions of the city of Le Mars for many years was the Prairie Club founded by Englishmen shortly before New Year's, 1881, at Captain Moreton's Dromore Farm. Present at the first meeting were M. J. Chapman, A. Ronaldson, H. J. Moreton, Arthur Gee, A. R. T. Dent, Lord Hobart, Captain Moreton, Captain F. R. Robinson, H. A. and J. G. Watson, A. C. Colledge, J. H. Preston, F. R. Price, G. C. Maclagan, W. Stubbs, T. Dealtry, M. B. Dodsworth, C. Eller, and O. T. Raymond. Elegant rooms in the business block built by Frank C. Cobden, an Englishman of means, became the club's home on December 17, 1881, its inauguration being marked by a *conversazione* to which a number of friends received special invitations. Shortly after prohibition went into effect in 1882 the club rooms underwent improvements that added "vastly to their elegant appearance and not a little to their convenience". According to a contemporaneous account of the event:

This club is composed entirely of English residents who have thus banded together for mutual pleasure and profit and in the arrangement and decoration of their apartments have spared no expense. The apartments of the club consist in all of five large rooms,

the parlors and writing rooms being particularly noticeable for their beautiful furniture and fine finish. In the first of these rooms is a fine billiard table of the latest improved manufacture, elegantly upholstered easy chairs, sofas, etc. In the room just back of this and into which it opens through large folding doors is another room corresponding in size and finish with the first. Here are books, magazines, papers, etc. This room is also supplied with tables, easy chairs and lamps and affords a very pleasant place in which to while away an hour or two. Directly back of this room is a smaller room very finely finished and furnished with writing desks and writing material. The sample or refreshment room is located just at the right of the main entrance and is supplied almost exclusively with imported goods. The sleeping apartments are just across the hall from the refreshment room and are very neatly furnished. All have been arranged with an eye to comfort as well as beauty and are under the management of some of the leading English residents. At present, we learn, the club has about forty-five members and is in a very flourishing condition both socially and financially.<sup>271</sup>

A special event in the early history of the club was the entertainment contributed by the Prairie Minstrels, an organization of the younger members whose musical talent simply had to find expression: H. Rickards, piano; C. H. Eccles, flute; F. E. Romanes, violin; B. H. Thomson, violincello; W. H. Stevens, banjo; James Douglas, drum; Jack Walkinshaw, bones; J. H. Grayson, triangle; C.

E. Dacres, tamborine; F. Horsburgh, A. W. Maitland, D. Hewett, E. F. Robertson, F. R. Price, and Richard Walker, voice.

After some rehearsing, the Prairie Minstrels emerged "in all the glory of burnt cork and collars a yard long", played to the Prairie Club and then to the public in Apollo Hall, and later showered their melody on neighboring towns. At a later date the English boys were declared a success also as "Home Minstrels". As the Le Mars Dramatic Company they appeared at Sheldon and Sibley where their English friends banqueted them royally.<sup>272</sup>

The Prairie Club became well-known to Americans for its courtesy and hospitality. Its social evenings and other gatherings attained wide popularity among those who were so fortunate as to be invited. Every year, on the anniversary of the club's founding, each member invited an American as guest for the birthday celebration. In recognition of these repeated courtesies, Americans in 1885 tendered their English hosts a dinner-dance at the Le Mars hotel. The remarks made by Colonel Emery in his address to the gentlemen of the club and their response as publicly reported are worthy of repetition here:

You came among us when the grasshopper was a burden, when the outlook for this beautiful northwest



was anything but flattering, but bringing with you financial ability and social worth and putting these factors into immediate and effective use, you were instrumental largely in saving us from financial embarrassment, and forming a social attachment unsullied. You have also manifested your social ability by throwing open the doors of your club parlors to our citizens, and giving us delightful entertainment and social intercourse, and to more fully reciprocate your kindness, your American friends of Le Mars have tendered this social reception and trust that it may be an oasis in the memory of all. Allow me, Mr. President, to present to you this banner in behalf of your American friends, and as it decorates the walls of your club room with its letters of gold and appearance of beauty may the golden chord of friendship encircle us for time infinitum.

Mr. Garnett, vice-president of the Prairie club, in the absence of President Eccles, accepted the banner, in a few well chosen words in substance as follows: That it afforded him great pleasure in behalf of his club to accept this emblem of friendship from American friends; that this elegant reception and musical and social entertainment could only more closely cement the tie of friendship, which already existed; that his people have no reason to regret coming here, and as this was to be the future home of many of them the evening's manifestation of good feeling could only tend to bring the people of the two lands nearer together; and that the occasion would be long remembered and his trust was that the future might be as fruitful of pleasures as the present and the past. He



spoke with much feeling and closed with a proposal of three cheers for the American friends. Mr. Chapman proposed three cheers for the ladies and Col. Emery suggested that all unite in three cheers for the old and new country. The thunders that followed made numerous and sundry of the regular guests of the hotel to turn over in their beds and wonder if it was a baby cyclone or a London edition of dynamiting.

Many then departed for home, others repaired again to the dancing hall spending two hours or more in revelry of musical motion — and thus ended an event that makes a new era in the fellowship between England and America in Le Mars.<sup>273</sup>

Down to the year 1892 the Prairie Club admitted to membership only those who were or had been British subjects, the entrance fee being \$25 and annual dues about as much more. As the club's numbers dwindled, it was decided to admit Americans as "sustaining members":<sup>274</sup> the latter have in fact enabled the organization to survive until to-day, but with prohibition in force the club is not what it was in the olden days.

From the beginning of the English settlement dancing parties were a frequent feature of the social life. The Closes and their friends enjoyed the ball room at Le Mars, especially in the winter months of 1880. On one occasion the Closes chartered an engine and coach to convey from Sioux City certain guests invited to a festival at

the Albion House. Nor were masquerades uncommon. As a charming close to the Le Mars Races in June, 1881, the Close brothers gave a "Soiree Dansante" to visiting friends. A news item of the day told of the event as follows:

The invited guests gathered in the brilliantly lighted room, the north wall of which was draped with American and English flags. In the southeast corner a boudoir was extemporized, in which a fine collation was served. About sixty couples were present, among whom we noticed, besides the English ladies and gentlemen, W. H. Dent and wife, P. F. Dalton and wife, Miss Jennie Buchanan—all of Lemars. From Sioux City we noted Judge Allison, wife and daughters, Fannie and Hattie; Miss Goewey; Miss Pease; Miss Davis; Miss Cornish; Miss Weare; S. M. Marsh; J. H. Bolton; A. J. Moore; F. D. Peters; C. M. Swan; W. H. Beck; and Ehla Allen of St. Paul. Music was furnished by the Sioux City Quadrille Band. The gentlemen were dressed in the most approved style prevailing at English evening parties, and the ladies wore the rich and varied toilets, it is their privilege to assume. The dance was entered into with spirit, and at an early hour the party broke up, with a lively sense of the generosity and urbanity of their hosts.<sup>275</sup>

The Le Mars Jockey Club very frequently ended an exciting day of races in June or October with a grand race ball.

Sometimes the colonists came from the four corners to picnic together. Thus, one day in July

a merry cavalcade led by a four-in-hand drove north down Main Street, "Jack Wakefield winding the horn and waking the echoes in old English style", all seeking the cool shades of Payne's grove. Mr. and Mrs. A. Ronaldson, as host and hostess, were ably assisted by the Eller brothers; "and never did the festal bowers of this popular picnic ground witness a jollier gathering." Besides those mentioned there were present the Morgans, Hirsts, Chapmans, Humbles, Bensons, and the Messrs. F. B. Close, Christian, Desmoulins, Ewen, Farquhar, Gaskell, Grayson, Grouse, MacLagan, Paley, Rickards, Romanes, Wakefield, Walker, Warren, Watson, and Wilde. "After the wants of the inner man had been supplied, the woods became vocal with the songs of merrie England, and in the lull of lively carols reminiscences of the tight little Isle were indulged in, and memories of happy gatherings were recalled."

Quite extraordinary was the amount of traveling back and forth between England and the Le Mars colony. William B. Close and his bride journeyed to the former's old home on business and pleasure bent. Jack Wakefield always returned "hale, hearty and happy as of yore", though his friends feared once that his vessel had gone down. John Hopkinson also found time one winter to visit old scenes. A delegation of healthy,

substantial, well-to-do looking English settlers from Tete des Morts, Canada, came to look at the colony in March, 1881. Two brothers came to see John Milne of the Hawks Nest, and Captain Sturges also visited his friends. Accompanying Mr. Sykes who left Manchester to inspect his holdings in Lyon County in the spring of 1881, John Brooks Close called upon his brothers at Le Mars.

In April almost every year Admiral Farquhar of Her Majesty's Navy journeyed to visit his daughter and six sons Albert, Joseph, Mowbray, Will, Charles, and James on his farm; and Captain Moreton, also formerly in the Royal Navy, entertained for him. Adair Colpoys, while on a visit to his old friend Herbert Cope with whom he had spent years in the Far East, decided to make his home in Le Mars. On their American tour Lord and Lady Harris included the colony where her brothers, the Jervis boys, were pupils of Captain Moreton. Great was the disappointment when the Duke of Sutherland passed through Le Mars without stopping to call upon his fellow countrymen. Lord Carlin, however, did better; and the Earl of Dunmore promised to look over the country before going extensively into the stock business. During her stay Lady Howard addressed the people of the Congregational Church. Lord Hobart, "a real live scion of the English nobility",



after a few years' residence at Le Mars, left in 1885 to enter the British army for service in the Soudan, a large number of friends bidding him farewell.<sup>276</sup>

At various times visits were paid to the mother country, England or Scotland, by such colonists as W. A. Paulton, G. C. Maclagan, H. Rickards, F. C. S. Dodsworth ("whose eccentricities, recklessness, and genial nature had made him a general favorite"), J. H. Grayson, H. J. M. Dalton, A. W. Maitland (another popular youth), J. C. Cooper, Charles Eller (returning with his sister), Henry and Reginald Moreton, and "four as good fellows as the English colony could boast", Fred Horsburgh, H. Hillyard, Major Brockbank, and Tom Dowglass. Some of these gentlemen returned with brides, others with friends to join the colony. At least one Englishman, Herbert Cope, "a very intelligent and practical agriculturist and shrewd business man", who went to England to look after his affairs there and in China, brought his family back to Le Mars a year later, having found the old world not so attractive as he anticipated.

Of visiting within the colony there was not a little. Percy Prescott "had a large gathering of the boys" at his home between Alton and Orange City in Sioux County; and the Close brothers after removing to Sibley and Pipestone sometimes

came as the guests of their friends at Le Mars, as did other English people from those towns and Sioux City and Akron, although English residents in the latter place very early scattered to the four quarters of the globe. At one time many of the colonists journeyed to Sioux City to hear their countryman, Oscar Wilde, "the great æsthete".

Especially enjoyable was the journey of a delegation in 1881 to take Christmas dinner with a number of British brethren at Florence, Kansas: after a sumptuous repast, including Budweiser and English bottled ale, came a toast to Queen Victoria and the national anthem, followed by toasts to "The President of the United States", "The Ladies", and "Absent Friends". Montague Chapman of Le Mars then "made a neat little speech stating that, while the colony at that place numbered about 600, and was probably the strongest in the United States, their organization or club of sixty members was far behind what he had seen here, and could not get up such a dinner as they had just enjoyed." Mr. Colledge, having received vociferous applause for his singing, rendered several encores.<sup>277</sup> A few days later the guests while touring New Mexico were made the theme of a newspaper story:

The Pacific express was detained in Raton several hours on Monday which gave us an opportunity for

making the acquaintance of a jolly party of Britishers, a delegation from the famous English colony at Lemars, Iowa. The delegation consisted of Mr. M. J. Chapman, Secretary of the Colony, and his wife; Messrs. H. A. Watson, A. C. Colledge, C. Eller, H. C. Christian, A. G. M. MacNair, and H. DePledge. These young gentlemen are representative men in the colony, which includes members of families of high social standing in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. The colony numbers about six hundred at present, and comprises fine agricultural and stock farms, in the neighborhood of \$3,000,000 capital having already been invested. The Lemars delegation was in charge of Mr. S. Nugent Townshend, correspondent of the London Field and President of the British Association of Kansas. Mr. Townshend was assisted by Mr. W. P. Denton-Cardew also of the British Association, who visited Raton a few weeks since. The party paid a visit to Santa Fe and passed east by Thursday's Atlantic express. All of the party have accepted an invitation to join a fishing expedition that will start out from Raton next summer on a three-weeks tour of Colfax county.<sup>278</sup>

Considering the large number of handsome young Englishmen in northwestern Iowa, it is not surprising that weddings sometimes occurred. The distinction of contracting the first marriage within the colony belongs to Montague J. Chapman and Aimee de Pledge: their honeymoon consisted of a trip to the Mardi Gras and a weary return through a real western snow blockade. The

first colonist to select a wife, however, was no less than the founder of the colony, William B. Close. At New York City he married the lady of his choice, Mary Paullin, whose father, Daniel Paulin, had induced the Close brothers to invest in lands adjacent to Le Mars.<sup>279</sup>

William Edgecomb, who had secured a license to wed Mary Fowler upon arrival at New York and lost it, married the lady at his farm near Sergeant's Bluff. Charles Kay and Walter Abraham Paulton returned from England with brides; and W. B. Young took a bride at Alva, Scotland. Other notable marriages within the settlement were those of Andrew Dowglass, John Campbell, Frederick Kingsbury Veal, James Brough Warren, Randolph Payne, Alfred Robert Tighe Dent, and Hugh Lyon Playfair Chiene, the latter to Florence Emily Sugden. A most interesting and elaborate society event in the autumn of 1881 was the marriage of Fred Brooks Close to Margaret Humble, both English residents of Le Mars. A formal dance at Apollo Hall preceded the wedding ceremony at Grace Church: attending this festal gathering were the elite of the English colony, a few Le Mars and Sioux City citizens, and most distinguished of all, John Walters, member of Parliament and proprietor of the *London Times*, who happened to be in the city on his tour of the



United States, accompanied by his daughter. The popular bride and groom banqueted their guests at the Albion House, were showered with expensive wedding gifts, and later departed for a seven months' honeymoon in England, France, and other continental countries.<sup>280</sup>

But death came occasionally to interrupt the routine of workaday life and to mar the gaiety of social intercourse among the English colonists. When President Garfield died from the effects of an assassin's bullet, Englishmen at Le Mars quickly responded in the hour of the nation's sorrow by holding impressive memorial services. With the Union Jack draped beneath the portrait of the martyr president, Rev. Cunningham and Captain Moreton addressed a meeting of their friends and many of them penned a letter of sympathy to the grief-stricken widow.<sup>281</sup>

Nor did the Grim Reaper fail to take toll among the colonists themselves during the early years — especially in the winter months. At Albion House died John S. Grundy, but lately arrived from England; while pneumonia took the life of Hugh, aged twenty-three, eldest son of Sir Edward Hornby of Sussex. About the same time Ernest Taylor and Herbert Dalton, aged thirty-one, succumbed to diphtheria. News of the accidental death of Hugh Watson while hunting in Scotland spread deepest

gloom among the many friends who were expecting to welcome him back to the ranch which he and his brother owned in the vicinity of the Big Sioux River.

If English settlers entertained any doubt about the uncertainty of life, the month of March, 1883, must have dispelled the last trace: the passing of Mrs. G. C. Maclagan and of Walter, son of General Lockhart of British India, due to consumption, occurred almost contemporaneously with the suicide of Basil Dempsey, a pleasant, good-natured, well-to-do young man who had just returned to his farm from a trip to Texas. Particularly shocking among the younger set was the end of Alexander W. Dunwaters, not yet aged twenty-one and once a farm pupil of Captain Moreton: he had left a wealthy mother in England to visit and to hunt with his friends in Iowa; but after a short struggle with pneumonia he succumbed, and sorrowing countrymen laid him in the grave.<sup>282</sup>

Sad, too, were the tidings when a friend or relative passed away in the old home thousands of miles away. A telegram received at the Prairie Club told of the death of William E. Gladstone. Charles Dacres mourned the loss of his aged father, Admiral Sir Sydney Colpoys Dacres; and a brother grieved over the untimely end of Lord St. Vincent on the field of battle in the Soudan.

If any member of the English colony in the early years had the fortune to become a peer of the British realm, a vigilant press at Le Mars failed to record the fact; and when in a burst of enthusiasm a newspaper announced that the Hon. Henry Frank Sugden of Arlington Township, Woodbury County ("Old Sug" as the colonists familiarly called him), had just succeeded to the barony of St. Leonard, by the death of his brother, Mrs. Sugden entered a prompt, if not vigorous, denial.<sup>283</sup>

## XXI

### ENGLISH CHURCH LIFE IN NORTH- WESTERN IOWA

The fact that members of the English colony had severed their connections with the Anglican Church of the mother country did not mean a lapse of religious life in the wilds of northwestern Iowa. On the contrary, as early as April, 1880, the Rev. H. P. Marriott-Dodgington of Trinity College (Cambridge), a clergyman of independent means with estates in Dorset, was ministering gratuitously to their needs in the parish of Grace Church at Le Mars. During his absence to look after his affairs in England, lay services were conducted in Apollo Hall by M. J. Chapman and Captain Moreton whom the Bishop of the Iowa Diocese had asked to be ordained. Early in March, 1881, the rector returned to his parish and took a foremost part in promoting the building of a place of worship; but it was not long before he found it necessary to journey back to England to be gone for at least one year.

As lay reader, Captain Moreton again took charge until the arrival in August, 1881, of a new



rector, Rev. Herbert Noel Cunningham of Brasenose College, a graduate of Oxford University and a man of fine ability and great scholarship. Ordained in England by the Bishop of Oxford, he resigned his curé near Reading and came to Le Mars. He had visited Bishop Perry at Davenport, Iowa, and had been made a presbyter of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America. His appointment was duly confirmed, and induction by the Bishop of Iowa followed soon after. Services according to the Anglican ritual thus became regular among the English settlers; and, according to a newspaper report, to Le Mars belonged the "distinction of possessing the only church in the United States wherein prayers are offered for Queen Victoria as the head of a nation".<sup>284</sup>

The rector's first duty, it is said, was the burial at Portlandville (now Akron), fourteen miles away, of a countryman who had but recently crossed the ocean to make his home in Iowa. There he also held services at stated intervals for the benefit of his English parishioners. On one such occasion his pulpit at Le Mars was ably filled by Canon Neville who had purchased a section of land in Sioux County and offered it for sale at eight dollars per acre in order that he might be nearer his friends in Plymouth County. It is interesting to note here that another distinguished

churchman had recently invested in thirteen hundred acres of Sioux County land—Rev. F. G. Howard, M. A., Fellow of Trinity College and Proctor of Cambridge University, which last title prompted the newspaper scribe at Le Mars to write: “We dare say our good friend Mr. J. Wakefield will remember when, in his college days, he met Mr. Howard at a wine in Malcolm Street.”<sup>285</sup> At another time Rev. Edgar Jacob, vicar of Portsea, officiated in Grace Church.

In his travels about the country to meet the members of his widely scattered flock, the rector also conducted services at West Fork or Quorn (the home of William B. Close). Not content with his labors as a circuit-riding parson, he undertook to conduct a school or academy for the children of his parish and organized a singing class for their benefit, so great was his diligence and enthusiasm as a worker. As a token of his parishioners' appreciation, he received an elegant student's lamp at the time of his first Christmas party in the colony. He became, moreover, the president of a chess club of eighteen members who met frequently to enjoy their favorite indoor game. He also advertised that as late Colhitt Exhibitioner of Brasenose College and graduate in classical honors he would undertake the education of boys and make arrangements for boarding

pupils: and so, shortly after New Year's, 1883, he opened a day school for boys and girls. A few weeks later he journeyed to Philadelphia to await the arrival of his fiancée from England and returned to Le Mars a benedict. In the summer occurred the consecration of Grace Church's new place of worship as St. George's Church, which had been erected at a cost of \$6000.<sup>286</sup>

An event of some importance in the history of St. George's parish at this time was the coming of Major Nassau Somerville Stephens and his family, announcement of the fact at Le Mars being conveyed by one of the newspapers in the following terms:

Major Nassau Stephens, of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, arrived here last Thursday, and will act for the time being as Lay Reader in St. George's church at this place. The Major served in the British army twenty-two years, but finally decided to take orders, for which he is now preparing. His ordination is expected to take place in Lemars about Christmas. He is a frank, genial, earnest gentleman, deeply imbued with a spirit of devotion for the work to which he consecrates his life. THE SENTINEL wishes him success, and his family much pleasure in their chosen home.

After his ordination the major declared he would probably do mission work in the parish. He attended Nashotah Theological Seminary, was

recommended for deacon's orders in 1889, and in due time became a priest.<sup>287</sup>

Along with all the activities already suggested, Rev. Cunningham three times during his incumbency prepared for the press St. George's edition of the monthly publication of the Episcopal Church in Iowa.<sup>288</sup> To the sincere regret of the whole parish, which had found him earnest, efficient, and faithful in his work, Rev. Cunningham tendered his resignation to take effect on April 4, 1884, and bore with him to a church in Gardner, Massachusetts, the best wishes of his numerous Le Mars friends. Services in St. George's Church were then conducted by the Revs. B. R. Kirkbride, G. W. Seppings, J. E. Higgins, and H. L. Bradon. Not until November 27, 1884, did the Rev. A. Vaughan Colston fill the vacancy. He remained for about four years.

For the benefit of the rectory the parishioners rendered Gilbert and Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance" in the playhouses at Sioux City and Le Mars; and upon the death of General Grant they paid a solemn tribute to his memory and character. To celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1887 Rev. Colston preached a jubilee sermon to Americans and English in St. George's Church, draped with the flags of both countries. The rector closed with the words: "If, this morning, I have re-



vived your patriotism, it is but to make you love your adopted country the better". After the sermon the congregation sang "God Save the Queen."<sup>289</sup>

Not only did Captain Moreton serve as lay reader in the colony's Episcopal Church, as indicated above, but as one of its most active leaders in religious life he early exerted himself in the formation of a Young Men's Christian Association, and he worked for a home in which the young men of the community might spend their evenings and leisure hours. Having obtained \$1500 from friends in England, he sought an equal amount among the people who were to be the beneficiaries of his project. He secured the good wishes and support of many citizens who hoped that the association would "not be placed on a narrow footing but made broad and liberal so that all may feel at home in it." That the Captain's plans carried is evident from the fact that he served as president of the society.

Captain Reynolds Moreton was a broad churchman, and some said that on account of his natural enthusiasm and excess of zeal he was more of a preacher than a business man. It is interesting to add that he had assisted Moody and Sankey in London, had charge of the Presbyterian Church of Sioux City during the regular pastor's illness

for nine months, and later spent several weeks in revival meetings at Fort Dodge.<sup>290</sup>

Reports of the diocese of Iowa show a gradual decline in the condition of religious activities among the English settlers of northwestern Iowa. In 1887 St. George's Church at Le Mars consisted of sixty-three families of two hundred and seven persons of whom eighty-nine were communicants; at Akron six families of twenty-one persons and at Calliope in Sioux County one family of eight persons were cared for by a missionary, Rev. Arthur Everard Marsh.<sup>291</sup> Unorganized missions at Kingsley and Hawarden made no report, while those of Sibley and Spirit Lake ministered to eleven and twelve families of fifty-six and forty individuals, respectively. Organized missions had been established at Larchwood, Cherokee, Sheldon, and Spencer. From 1882 to 1890 Episcopalians of Sioux City were quite well looked after by the Rev. William Richmond, a Dublin University man.<sup>292</sup> In 1890 the organized missions of Larchwood, Spencer, and Spirit Lake were vacant and made no report, while Sheldon had only fourteen communicants. Unorganized missions at Akron and Kingsley existed in name only. At Sibley, where services had been regularly celebrated, it was reported that "the people of the congregation being English, the majority of them have returned

to their native country to remain", leaving the church very small: all the towns mentioned, besides Cherokee and Estherville, reported only eighty-one Episcopalian (chiefly English) families, while St. George's Church at Le Mars alone claimed seventy-three families of two hundred and seven persons. In 1893 missions still existed at Sheldon, Sibley, Spencer, Spirit Lake, Kingsley, Larchwood, and Rock Rapids, but they were insignificant. The mission at Estherville cared for only thirty families, and St. George's congregation had dropped to fifty-four families of one hundred and seventy persons, comparatively few of whom were English.<sup>293</sup>

## XXII

### DISAPPEARANCE OF THE BRITISH FROM NORTHWESTERN IOWA

Of the Britishers who were induced to come to the counties of northwestern Iowa during the eighties not many can be found living there to-day. The farm life that promised wealth and happiness to the immigrants ended in disappointment and even failure for most of the young unmarried men. Those who bought land and depended on hired help soon saw their farms leaving them; while others left the country to live in town where pioneer conditions did not press so heavily upon them.

At the beginning of the British invasion of the region it was freely prophesied that stock farming would bring especially big returns because of free pasturage on the prairies: cattle and sheep could range everywhere on excellent grazing land without let or hindrance. Stock farmers were, however, warned that this condition was precarious since it was evident that within ten years there would not be much good free range country left east of the Missouri River. In the event of immi-



gration cutting off free pasture, stock men were told that they could either sell their farms at probably four or five times the original cost, exclusive of improvements, and move to Dakota or Montana, or else they could turn their attention to fattening stock on grain.<sup>294</sup>

Some of the Britishers made money by the increase in the price of their lands; but none of them went farther west to continue stock raising. A goodly number with characteristic bulldog tenacity stuck to their farms and made a reasonable profit on their industry, many of them in time becoming naturalized American citizens. Those who bought no lands quickly dissipated their money and within a short time wandered out of the State, some eventually going back to the mother country.

Many of the immigrants after a period of residence in the West suffered so intensely from homesickness or other causes that they left for the old home never to return. R. Smyth and W. Grouse were "thoroughly disgusted with the beautiful west and the 'Eden of Iowa', and vowed they would hereafter give America a wide berth." Captain J. D. Aubertin returned to Liverpool, and Will Young had "had enough of the wild western land where the playful cyclone rages, and concluded to spend the remainder of his days in the highlands of Scotland." Arthur Gee and his

family, after giving Iowa two trials, also took permanent leave.

Mrs. A. F. Sugden and her brother returned home after selling their entire outfit — horses, cattle, implements, and imported English household goods. When H. B. Southworth joined the exodus, an American friend suggested sending him a letter of condolence on Christmas morning and added: “How crowded and tame that country must feel to a man who has roamed over our boundless prairie, and been touched by its wild untamable spirit!”

Of the three hundred who joined the Prairie Club during its first decade only a few are left in Iowa to tell about those early days: they reside chiefly at Le Mars and Sioux City. In the former town are G. A. C. Clarke, Adair G. Colpoys, F. K. Veal, R. M. Latham, and the four Nicholson brothers. At Sioux City dwell A. Y. Weir, Henry H. Drake, T. H. Dealtry, Percy E. Prescott, E. A. Fullbrook, and George E. Ward who was a member of the State House of Representatives from 1908 to 1910; Francis P. Baker remains at Akron; and H. C. Christian and Randolph Payne at Kingsley. Other members of the Close colony are Will Paulton of Sioux Falls, South Dakota; A. C. Colledge and Henry Moreton, of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Herbert Cope of Medicine Hat,

Alberta, Canada; M. J. Chapman of Pullman and A. R. T. Dent of Seattle, Washington; Will Farquhar of Joliet, Illinois; and Mowbray Farquhar of the Canadian Mounted Police.

Many lie buried in various parts of the United States: Tom Dowglass at Cherokee, J. H. Preston at Sioux City, Jack Watson at Chicago, Percy Atkinson at Hawarden, and Fred Statter in California. F. E. Romanes died in Germany; Jack Wakefield in Australia; and J. H. Grayson, Fred Paley, F. R. Price, A. Ronaldson, Con Benson, Harry Eller, and G. C. Maclagan went to their graves in the British Isles.

A considerable number are reported as still living in the British Isles: W. Roylance Court, H. Rickards, Frank Cobden, A. W. Maitland, E. F. Robertson, G. Garnett, Albert Farquhar, H. Hilliard, Walter A. Paulton, Cecil Benson, and one of the Margesson boys who married Lord Hobart's sister. The father of the colony, William Brooks Close, has lived in England in recent years. One became a tramp and another a stevedore, while a third, after several months of high living so long as his credit was good, dropped out of sight, returned one day many years later and after paying his debts with interest disappeared as suddenly as he had come. Ronald Jervis has emerged as Earl St. Vincent; Lord Hobart is now the Earl

of Buckinghamshire; and Almeric Paget, who married a sister of Harry Payne Whitney of New York and served as a member of the House of Commons for Cambridge University until a few years ago, is now Lord Queenborough.<sup>295</sup>

But no matter where the members of the colony strayed — wherever and whenever a few gathered to recall and reminisce about the olden days, with light hearts they were always able to join in the colony song and its refrain:

## THE COLONY SONG

## 1

The ship was outward bound  
And we drank a health around:  
'Twas the year of '81 or thereabout.  
We were bound for prairie farms  
Where like bees the dollars swarm  
And our hearts, tho' young and green, were pretty stout.  
I was two and twenty then and like many other men  
Among that tough community on board,  
I'd been raising Cain in town and my money being gone,  
How to raise another fiver I was floored.

*Chorus*

Here's a health to all the boys  
Who are out of this world's joys  
And have to earn their living by hard toil,  
But let us hope that ere they rust,  
They may pile up lots of dust  
And live again upon their native soil.



## 2

In our exams all plucked and out of England chucked,  
 Out of patience were our friends and most unkind;  
 And they told us pretty plain that ere they'd see us home  
     again,  
 Our fortunes o'er the seas we'd have to find.  
 So we liquored up and laughed day and night aboard that  
     craft  
 Until we parted at New York and went ashore.  
 And from then until this time  
 We have never made a dime  
 But hope there are better times in store.

## 3

For if salt pork and green tea are choicest blessings we  
 Are certainly above all measure blessed;  
 But we've been so long in need  
 That we're one and all agreed  
 We can very well dispense with all the rest.  
 But as each man tells his tale  
 'Tis monotonous and stale:  
 We found there was no money on a farm  
 And every honest chum to the same low ebb has come,  
 But being "bust" don't do him any harm.

## 4

How one in Iowa went ploughing all the day,  
 One in Tennessee pioneered and died.  
 One sold papers on the cars or cocktails at a bar  
 Or in prairie stores forgot old country pride.  
 And one unlucky swain thought he'd just go home again  
 But was received with cold shoulders by his friends.  
 One sucker dug a hole in the hopes of finding coal  
 And one peddled soap and odds and ends.

## 5

How one went pitching hay for fifty cents a day  
And one in a shanty kept a school;  
North and South and East and West we have done our  
level best  
But failed to make the dollars as a rule.  
And some they took to drink and some to slinging ink  
And shepherded or cattle drove awhile,  
But never that I know so far as stories go  
Did one of us e'er make his pile.

## 6

Well, 'tis better here than there:  
Since rags must be our wear  
On the prairie all are equal every man  
And we're all of us agreed  
That a gentleman in need  
Must earn his daily living as he can.<sup>296</sup>

It is manifestly impossible to trace the course of life of all the several hundred Britishers who at one time or another sojourned in northwestern Iowa. Whether numbered among the living or the dead, they are scattered far and wide. The Close colony which began with scores of Britishers in possession of prairie farms for miles in all directions from Le Mars proved to be short-lived: the lands which they owned gradually passed into the hands of other people, including many natives of the British Isles of a somewhat different type. It can hardly be maintained that they left much

of a permanent impress on the community in which they lived — at least not in the same way as did their neighbors to the north, the Hollanders of Maurice and Orange City and Sioux Center and many other towns. The Dutch who began to settle there in 1869 and 1870 have never let go of their holdings; thousands of immigrants have joined them in the half century past; and they and their descendants, probably thirty thousand strong in 1922, have made the region famous for its excellence in agriculture.<sup>297</sup>

A survey of the population figures for the Iowa counties into which the Close brothers helped bring the hum of life shows that the British-born residents were at one time a considerable element.<sup>298</sup> That they and thousands of other British immigrants were wanted and expected to come in increasing numbers — of this fact future generations of Americans will always be reminded when they glance at the map and see the names of British origin, many of which were designed to attract emigration from abroad: Plymouth County and O'Brien County, the villages of Quorn and Archer, and the towns of Sutherland, Granville (once Grenville), Alton, Ireton, Hawarden, and across the river in South Dakota the towns of Alcester and Beresford.<sup>299</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

### PART I

#### CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup> *Historical and Comparative Census of Iowa, 1836-1880*, pp. xv, xvi.

<sup>2</sup> This book of 252 pages, with an interesting map, was entitled *Sketches of Iowa, or the Emigrant's Guide*. It was published by J. H. Colton, who during those years issued many such guides describing the West.

<sup>3</sup> Newhall's *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book,"* p. viii.

<sup>4</sup> Extracts from the English press relating to his lectures can be found in Newhall's *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book,"* p. iv. This guide to Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa contains 100 pages.

<sup>5</sup> Newhall's *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book,"* pp. v, vii-x.

<sup>6</sup> Newhall's *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book,"* pp. 62, 63.

<sup>7</sup> Newhall's *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book,"* pp. 74, 75.

<sup>8</sup> Newhall's *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book,"* pp. 74-78.

<sup>9</sup> For a list of these books see Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, pp. 71, 72.



<sup>10</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, pp. iii, iv, v, 5, 6.

<sup>11</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, p. iii.

<sup>12</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, p. iv.

<sup>13</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, pp. iv, v.

<sup>14</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, pp. 3, 7.

<sup>15</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, p. 38.

<sup>16</sup> Mann's *The Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States of America*, pp. 39, 68.

<sup>17</sup> Wolfe's *History of Clinton County, Iowa*, Vol. I, pp. 55-58, 281, 282.

<sup>18</sup> *History of Clinton County, Iowa* (Western Historical Company, 1879), pp. 636, 642; Wolfe's *History of Clinton County, Iowa*, Vol. I, p. 302.

<sup>19</sup> *Iowa State Register* (Weekly, Des Moines), November 16, 1870.

## CHAPTER II

<sup>20</sup> Newhall issued a third volume, *A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846; or, the Emigrant's Guide*, a book of 106 pages. His favorite title page inscription was a statement of Coleridge: "The possible destiny of the United States of America, as a nation of a hundred millions of freemen, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, living under the laws of Alfred, and speaking the language of Shakespeare and Milton, is an

august conception. Why should we not wish to see it realized?"

Colton's *The Emigrant's Hand-Book* (1848) contains some information on Iowa. On pages 116-123 appears an address of the Irish Emigrant Society of New York to the people of Ireland.

<sup>21</sup> *Historical and Comparative Census of Iowa, 1836-1880*, pp. 168, 169.

<sup>22</sup> *Northern Iowa. By a Pioneer. Containing Valuable Information for Emigrants.* (40 pages).

<sup>23</sup> See Marcus L. Hansen's article, *Official Encouragement of Immigration to Iowa* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XIX, pp. 165-167.

<sup>24</sup> *Iowa: The Home for Immigrants, being a Treatise on the Resources of Iowa, and Giving Useful Information with Regard to the State, for the Benefit of Immigrants and Others.*

<sup>25</sup> For these facts see *Iowa Legislative Documents, 1872*, Document No. 27, pp. 3-9.

<sup>26</sup> *Iowa State Register* (Weekly, Des Moines), July 13, 1870.

<sup>27</sup> Mr. Edginton's work is reported in the *Iowa Legislative Documents, 1872*, Document No. 27, pp. 22, 23.

<sup>28</sup> In the *Christian World* of London appeared an article by Christopher Crayon on *Iowa as a Field for Emigration*. This account is reprinted in the *Iowa State Register* (Weekly, Des Moines), February 1, 1871.

<sup>29</sup> This arrangement between the State and certain railroad companies is referred to in the *Iowa Legislative Docu-*

ments, 1872, Document No. 27, p. 7, and the *Iowa State Register* (Weekly, Des Moines), May 25, 1870.

<sup>30</sup> Reported in the *Iowa State Register* (Weekly, Des Moines), May 15, 1872.

<sup>31</sup> Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. V, p. 84.

American consuls in England must have heard of the plans of the Close brothers of Manchester to establish a community of Britishers in northwestern Iowa.

<sup>32</sup> *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XIX, pp. 188-190.

<sup>33</sup> *The Manchester Guardian*, quoted in the *Iowa State Register* (Weekly, Des Moines), February 11, 1881.

<sup>34</sup> *Iowa Legislative Documents*, 1886, Vol. V, Report of H. S. Fairall, Commissioner, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, the Iowa Railroad Land Company's *Choice of Iowa Farming Lands*, 1870, and the Sioux City and St. Paul Railroad Company's *Farms and Homes in the Near West Located in Northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota*. The land commissioner of the latter company seems to have had an office at 57 Charing Cross, London, S. W.

### CHAPTER III

<sup>36</sup> *Historical and Comparative Census of Iowa, 1836-1880*, pp. 168, 170; *Census of Iowa, 1885*, pp. 19, 24, 26, 45, 47, 63, 65, 68.

<sup>37</sup> Annual reports of the four Roman Catholic dioceses of Iowa can be found in *The Official Catholic Directory*.

<sup>38</sup> *United States Census*, 1880, pp. 494, 506-508.

<sup>39</sup> *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 164-166, 1895, pp. 305-307, 1905, pp. 517-520, 1915, pp. 465-467.

<sup>40</sup> *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 1-82, 1895, pp. 331-333.

<sup>41</sup> *United States Census*, 1880, pp. 506-508; *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 164-166.

<sup>42</sup> *Census of Iowa*, 1895, pp. 331-333, 1915, pp. 462-464.

<sup>43</sup> *United States Census*, 1880, pp. 506-508; *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 164-166.

In 1895 Appanoose County had 374 Scotch and in 1915, 233, while Monroe and Woodbury counties had 232 and 205, respectively, in 1915.—*Census of Iowa*, 1915, pp. 465-467.

<sup>44</sup> *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 1-82, 1895, pp. 330-333.

<sup>45</sup> *United States Census*, 1880, pp. 494, 506-508 (the figures include the Welsh); *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 164-166, 1895, pp. 304-307, 1915, pp. 462-464.

<sup>46</sup> *Census of Iowa*, 1915, p. LV. The native-born Dutch, Russians, Bohemians, and Italians numbered 12,638, 9896, 9500, and 6261, respectively.

<sup>47</sup> The counties most frequently included in the census lists of different years were the ones with the most populous cities in Iowa: Dubuque, Scott, Polk, Pottawattamie, Linn, and Woodbury. Counties ranking next were Monroe, Clinton, Johnson, Wapello, Delaware, Black Hawk, Fayette, Greene, and Jasper. In several of these the Britishers were largely employed in coal mines.

## PART II

### CHAPTER I

<sup>48</sup> Statement by William B. Close in a letter from London, November 30, 1921.



<sup>49</sup> The middle name of the four brothers is that of their mother. John, who subsequently became John Brooks Close-Brooks on being made a partner in his uncle's bank in Manchester, was born on June 9, 1850; James, on July 30, 1851; William, on May 6, 1853; and Frederick, on December 7, 1854. Frederick B. Close began farming in Virginia in the year 1872. See Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> In his letter of November 30, 1921, Mr. Close appends the following observation:

"I go into these details because they all lead up to the reason why we settled in Western Iowa, and here we may pause to note how very little events turn the trend of one's life into a career that otherwise would not have been followed. For if a man at Birmingham had not made a faulty screw, and if the builder of our racing shell at Newcastle-on-Tyne had not happened to put this faulty screw into the bars supporting my slide, I should never have had the bruise; I should have gone out with the boys at Cape May on the training walk; I should never have met Mr. Daniel Paullin, who well advised me as to my business career; and I should never have married his daughter!"

See also Poultney Bigelow's version of the story in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXII, p. 764; and Mr. Close's reference to the advice of his fiancée's father in *Land and Water* (English periodical) for November, 1879.

In a letter from London, February 14, 1922, Mr. William B. Close wrote the following about Mr. Paullin:

"Mr. Daniel Paullin was not an Englishman by birth or descent. I believe he was descended from the De Paullins — Huguenots, who escaped from France. His ancestors on both sides had long been settled in England. He married a daughter of Jonathan Turner, one of the earliest settlers in Illinois and the first to adopt the present system of schools

now found throughout the West. Books have been written about him.”

<sup>51</sup> Letter of Wm. B. Close, November 30, 1921; Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 16.

<sup>52</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 17.

<sup>53</sup> *Land and Water*, November, 1879, quoted in Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 15.

#### CHAPTER II

<sup>54</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 12, contains a picture and floor plan of one of these pioneer houses.

<sup>55</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 6.

<sup>56</sup> William Dalrymple, who with a brother afterwards operated this farm, writes from Minneapolis that his father in 1875 purchased for himself and partners about 40,000 acres in Cass and Trail counties, North Dakota. Of this Red River Valley land they farmed as much as 30,000 acres.

<sup>57</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 16.

<sup>58</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*. (London), Vol. XLIV, p. 68.

<sup>59</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 16, 17.

#### CHAPTER III

<sup>60</sup> *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, July 31, 1881, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 4, 1881.

<sup>61</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 12, 1878.

<sup>62</sup> Letter of Wm. B. Close, November 30, 1921.

<sup>63</sup> John Brooks Close was reported as visiting his brothers at Le Mars in the spring of 1881. He accompanied Mr.

Sykes of Manchester who had come to look at his lands in Lyon County. — *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, 1881.

<sup>64</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine* (London), Vol. XLIV, pp. 65, 66.

<sup>65</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), July 9, 16, 1879.

#### CHAPTER IV

<sup>66</sup> Figures on the settlement of northwestern Iowa counties taken from the *United States Census*, 1880, pp. 59, 60:

COUNTY	1850	1860	1870	1880
WOODBURY COUNTY		1119	6172	14,996
PLYMOUTH COUNTY		148	2199	8566
CHEROKEE COUNTY		58	1967	8240
O'BRIEN COUNTY		8	715	4155
SIOUX COUNTY		10	576	5426
OSCEOLA COUNTY				2219
LYON COUNTY			221	1968

In 1880 Sioux City had grown from 1030 (in 1867) to 7366; Le Mars, from 152 (in 1870) to 1895; and Cherokee from 438 (in 1870) to 1523. — *Iowa Historical and Comparative Census*, 1836–1880, pp. 453, 560, 606.

<sup>67</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 14.

<sup>68</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 14. See also *Report of the Land Commissioner of the Iowa Railroad Land Company*, 1874, p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, pp. 65, 66. Mr. Close also refers to the economic condition of England in 1879 in his letter of November 30, 1921.

<sup>70</sup> Many of these letters were afterwards collected and republished in Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 15-24.

<sup>71</sup> This article in *The London Times* appeared in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), December 3, 1879.

## CHAPTER V

<sup>72</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 14, 1881.

<sup>73</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), December 3, 1879.

<sup>74</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 28.

<sup>75</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 2.

<sup>76</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 1.

<sup>77</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 29, 1881, quoting an article on "Iowa's Millionnaires" in *The Dubuque Telegraph*.

<sup>78</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 2, 27.

<sup>79</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 28.

<sup>80</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>81</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 4.

<sup>82</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 28.

## CHAPTER VI

<sup>83</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western, Iowa*, pp. 4, 7-9, 10, 13.

<sup>84</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 66.

<sup>85</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 10, 11, 13.

<sup>87</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>88</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 63.

<sup>89</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 14.

The Women's Emigration Society was founded in 1880 to give information and loans for the emigration of capable, educated women to the colonies. This society seems also to



have had a branch in Iowa. — *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLV, p. 315.

<sup>90</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 29-31.

#### CHAPTER VII

<sup>91</sup> On pages 31 and 32 of Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa* are given the following names of gentlemen in northwestern Iowa who could be communicated with in regard to the country by addressing them at Le Mars, Plymouth Co., Iowa:

- W. HYNDMAN WANN, Esq., of Belfast, Ireland
- H. W. THOMPSON, Esq., of Belfast, Ireland
- R. G. MAXTONE GRAHAM, Esq., of Battleby, Red Gorton, Perthshire, N. B.
- W. ROYLANCE COURT, Jun., Esq., of Newton Manor, Middlewich, Cheshire
- W. H. STATTER, Esq., of Whitefield, Manchester
- GERALD GARNETT, Esq., of Wyreside, Lancaster
- H. RICKARDS, Esq., Carleton Lodge, Whalley Range, Manchester
- DAVID B. M'LAREN, Esq., Manchester
- H. GREY DE PLEDGE, Esq., Gloucester
- HARRY ELLER, Esq., Manchester
- J. ELLER, Esq., Manchester
- ALFRED SHAW, Esq., of Arrowe Park, Birkenhead
- PHILIP NAIRN, Esq., of Lime House, Wetheral, Carlisle
- J. H. GRAYSON, Esq., of Oakfield, Prince's Road, Liverpool
- EDWARD T. WRIGHT, Esq., Rochester
- F. HORSBURGH, Esq., Edinburgh
- PERCY HEITLAND, Esq., The Priory, Shrewsbury
- GEORGE SMITH, Esq., Wymondham, Norfolk
- H. CARTER, Esq., Yorkshire
- W. SHARP, Esq., Whalley Range, Manchester
- CECIL F. BENSON, Esq., Langtons, Alresford, Hants
- W. WHITE MARSH, Esq., of Wethersfield, Braintree, Essex
- JOHN WAKEFIELD, Esq., Sedgewick, Kendal
- W. GASKELL, Esq., Kiddington Hall, Woodstock, Oxon
- PERCY E. PRESCOTT, Esq., The Abbey, Carlisle
- B. DEMPSEY, Esq., St. George's Mount, New Brighton
- A. E. MARSH, Esq., Tuxford, Newark

JAMES H. SMYTH, Esq., Claremont, The Park, Birkenhead  
W. S. SMYTH, Esq., Claremont, The Park, Birkenhead  
HUGH C. P. CHIENE, Esq., Eastburn, Helensburgh  
HARRY HILLYARD, Esq., Abbey Square, Chester  
ARMIGEL W. WADE, Esq., Dunmow, Essex

<sup>92</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), November 5, 1879.

<sup>93</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), November 19, 1879.

<sup>94</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), December 3, 1879, January 21, March 24, and April 28, 1880.

<sup>95</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), February 18, 1880.

<sup>96</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), March 31, 1880, February 2, 1881.

<sup>97</sup> *The Rural New Yorker*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 14, 1881.

<sup>98</sup> The two firms at this time were Close Brothers and Company and the Iowa Land Company, of which the Closes were managers. This distinction is not always easy to follow in the newspapers of those years.

<sup>99</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 2, 1882.

#### CHAPTER VIII

<sup>100</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), March 17, April 14, 1880.

<sup>101</sup> Close Brothers and Company still have an office in Chicago, although the original members have no more connection with it.

<sup>102</sup> *The Dubuque Telegraph* article is given in full in *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 29, 1881.

<sup>103</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, July 31, 1881, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 4, 1881.

<sup>104</sup> *History of Woodbury and Plymouth Counties*, pp. 435, 500, 509.

<sup>105</sup> *The Chicago Inter-Ocean*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 20, 27, March 3, 1881.

<sup>106</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 68. Mr. Close's statement on the rise in the value of their lands early in 1881 was as follows:

Land that we bought in

	Virgin Land
1877 in Crawford County for	\$2.75 to \$3.25
1878 in Woodbury and Plymouth	\$2.25 to \$3.50
1879 in " " "	\$3 to \$4
1880 in Plymouth and Sioux	\$4 to \$6
is now worth	
Virgin Land	Improved Land
\$10 to \$15	\$15 to \$25
\$ 7 to \$10	\$15 to \$20
\$ 6 to \$10	\$12 to \$15
\$ 6 to \$10	\$12 to \$15

<sup>107</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, 1881. According to J. W. Probert of the present firm of Close Brothers and Company, the Closes never served as agents for railroad companies, but simply bought all the unsold land of the Sioux City and St. Paul in Iowa, English capital being plentiful enough to enable them to make the deal. This seems to square with the report of their contract with the land department of that railway in the summer of 1880.

<sup>108</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, 1881. A letter by Mr. Benson to the *Manchester Courier*, January 20, 1881, appears in *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 3, 1881.

<sup>109</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, 12, 26, 1881.

<sup>110</sup> *Cedar Falls Gazette*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 9, 1881.

<sup>111</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), June 1, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 26, June 2, 1881.

<sup>112</sup> A famous correspondent of *The London Times*, "Bull Run" Russell, accompanied the duke's party and afterwards published a book of his travels in the United States and Canada in 1881. Quoting from his account of the visit to northwestern Iowa, the *Davenport Gazette* declared:

"The figures shown by Messrs. Close show good results; they are quite willing to welcome any gentleman desirous to try his fortune out West as a tenant, on conditions which they will communicate — the general principle being that the tenant and land owner should be in partnership, the returns of the occupant's farming to be divided in certain proportions between him and the owners, until the former becomes absolute proprietor of the place. They heard of persons coming from districts in Ireland, Scotland or England, who had associated together for mutual help and support." — *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 30, 1882.

<sup>113</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 4, 1881.

<sup>114</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 2, 1881. The Duke's money, no doubt, was all in the Iowa Land Company.

It is interesting to note that Sutherland in O'Brien County was named after the Duke who, about the time the town site was located, was a guest of the officials of the railroad company. They were sufficiently in love with His Royal Highness to name their town site after him. — Perkins's *History of O'Brien County, Iowa*, p. 367.

<sup>115</sup> The titles to land in this region were for a long time the subject of litigation in the courts. According to Mr. J. W. Probert of Chicago, the Iowa Land Company bought all the land finally awarded to the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul in O'Brien County. See also Perkins's *History of O'Brien County, Iowa*, p. 259.



<sup>116</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 4, 1881.

<sup>117</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 2, 1881.

<sup>118</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 28, 1881.

<sup>119</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 14, 1881.

<sup>120</sup> *The Sibley Gazette*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 28, 1881.

<sup>121</sup> *The Dubuque Telegraph*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 29, 1881. The Closes were said to have 500,000 acres for sale.

<sup>122</sup> *The Sioux City Journal*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 9, 1882.

<sup>123</sup> *The Worthington Advance*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 11, 1881.

<sup>124</sup> *The Fargo and Moorehead Daily Argus*, August 25, 1881, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 1, 1881.

<sup>125</sup> *The Worthington Advance*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 29, 1881.

<sup>126</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 31, 1883.

<sup>127</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 13, 1882.

#### CHAPTER IX

<sup>128</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 13, 1882. For an account of this prohibitory amendment see Clark's *The History of Liquor Legislation in Iowa* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VI, pp. 508-533.

<sup>129</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 3, 1882.

<sup>130</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 2.

## CHAPTER X

<sup>131</sup> The case of Koehler and Lange *v.* Hill, 60 Iowa 543-704.

<sup>132</sup> *The Le Mars Daily Liberal*, August 24, 1882.

<sup>133</sup> *The Minneapolis Tribune*, quoted in *The Evening Sentinel* (Le Mars), March 8, 1883.

<sup>134</sup> *The Evening Sentinel* (Le Mars), June 29, 1883.

<sup>135</sup> *The Pipestone Star*, quoted in *The Evening Sentinel* (Le Mars), July 12, August 16, 1883.

<sup>136</sup> *The Evening Sentinel* (Le Mars), October 31, 1883, February 19, 1884.

<sup>137</sup> These facts were obtained from Mr. J. W. Probert, the present manager of Close Brothers and Company with offices in the Conway Building at Chicago, farm loans being its chief business.

<sup>138</sup> *The Le Mars Daily Sentinel*, February 3, 1885.

Samuel Houghton Graves, another Cambridge University man, joined the firm at Chicago in 1885.

<sup>139</sup> *The Le Mars Daily Sentinel* for February 3 and March 17, 1885, shows that the Closes were still doing business in Iowa.

<sup>140</sup> Peck, Montzheimer, and Miller's *Past and Present of O'Brien and Osceola Counties, Iowa*, p. 673.

<sup>141</sup> Peck, Montzheimer, and Miller's *Past and Present of O'Brien and Osceola Counties, Iowa*, p. 674.

Mr. J. W. Probert of Chicago declares that he knew hun-

dreds of the Iowa Land Company's tenants and regarded them as a fine class of Iowa and Illinois farmers.

<sup>142</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, quoted in *The Le Mars Daily Sentinel*, May 14, 1884.

The aliens named here, except Mr. Sykes who had land in Lyon County, must have owned Minnesota land. The owners last referred to may include the Englishmen who had farms in northwestern Iowa. In any event, all these lands were probably being offered for sale by the Close brothers.

<sup>143</sup> *Congressional Record*, 48th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 2359, 4794. Members of Congress were given no authority for the following list:

PURCHASER	AMOUNT
English syndicate No. 1 (in Texas) . . . . .	4,500,000
English syndicate No. 3 (in Texas) . . . . .	3,000,000
Sir Edward Reid, K. C. B. (in Florida) . . . . .	2,000,000
English syndicate, headed by S. Philpotts . . . . .	1,800,000
C. R. and Land Company, of London Marquis of Tweedale	1,750,000
Phillips, Marshall & Co., of London . . . . .	1,300,000
German syndicate . . . . .	1,100,000
Anglo-American syndicate, headed by Mr. Rodgers, London	750,000
An English company (in Mississippi) . . . . .	700,000
Duke of Sutherland . . . . .	425,000
British Land and Mortgage Company . . . . .	320,000
Captain Whalley, M. P., for Peterboro, England . . . . .	310,000
Missouri Land Company, Edinburgh, Scotland . . . . .	300,000
Hon. Robert Tennant, of London . . . . .	230,000
Scotch Land Company, Dundee, Scotland . . . . .	247,666
Lord Dunmore . . . . .	100,000
Benjamin Newgas, Liverpool, England . . . . .	100,000
Lord Houghton . . . . .	60,000
Lord Dunraven . . . . .	60,000
English Land Company (in Florida) . . . . .	50,000
English Land Company, represented by B. Newgas . . . . .	50,000
An English capitalist (in Arkansas) . . . . .	50,000
Albert Peel, M. P., Leicestershire, England . . . . .	10,000
Sir John Lester Kaye, Yorkshire, England . . . . .	5,000
George Grant, of London (in Kansas) . . . . .	100,000

An English syndicate (represented by Close Bros.) in Wisconsin [probably Iowa and Minnesota] . . . . .	110,000
A Scotch company (in California) . . . . .	140,000
M. Ellerhauser (of Nova Scotia) in West Virginia . . . . .	600,000
A Scotch syndicate (in Florida) . . . . .	500,000
A. Boyesen, Danish consul at Milwaukee . . . . .	50,000
Missouri Land and S. S. Co., of Edinburgh, Scotland . . . . .	165,000
English syndicate (in Florida) . . . . .	59,000
Total acres . . . . .	20,941,666

CHAPTER XI

<sup>144</sup> This is no empty boast. The United States census for 1920 reveals the fact that Iowa leads the nation as a farming State, other States taking second place in the following respects:

Value of all farm property	}	Iowa	\$8,524,870,956
		Illinois	6,666,767,235
Value of land alone	}	Iowa	6,679,020,577
		Illinois	5,250,294,752
Value of farm buildings	}	Iowa	922,751,713
		Ohio	646,322,950
Value of farm machinery	}	Iowa	309,172,398
		Illinois	222,619,605
Value of live stock	}	Iowa	613,926,268
		Texas	592,926,006

With regard to the value of all farm property Sioux County came first in 1920, Pottawattamie second, and Plymouth third; Sioux leads also in the value of land and farm buildings, Pottawattamie being second, Plymouth third, and Woodbury fourth.

Pottawattamie led in the value of live stock, Plymouth came second, and Sioux third. In regard to the value of all crops produced in 1919, Sioux stood first, Pottawattamie second, and Plymouth third.

These counties are, of course, among the largest in the State. Furthermore, by using monetary forms of measurement, especially in 1920 when all values were inflated, it is no wonder that we find these counties in Iowa enormously



wealthy. Perhaps inflation had gone farther there than elsewhere, but even so no land in Iowa is more fertile than that of the northwestern counties.

<sup>145</sup> *History of the Counties of Woodbury and Plymouth, Iowa* (A. Warner & Co., 1890-1891), pp. 507, 508; *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), February 2, 1881.

<sup>146</sup> *The Monmouth Inquirer* (New Jersey), quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 3, 1881.

<sup>147</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), February 2, 9, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, 12, June 9, July 14, 1881; *The Sibley Tribune*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 12, 1882.

<sup>148</sup> *The Rock Rapids Reporter*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 12, 1882.

<sup>149</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 14, 1881.

<sup>150</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 2, 1882.

<sup>151</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), February 9, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, 1881.

<sup>152</sup> *The Sibley Gazette* and *The Sioux County Herald*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 21, May 12, 1881.

<sup>153</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), February 9, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 10, April 21, June 9, August 11, 1881.

<sup>154</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1868, pp. 126-128.

<sup>155</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 68; *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 16, 1881.

<sup>156</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 2, 1882.

<sup>157</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, 1881, February 2,

1882. - These farms were advertised for rent in *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 21, August 4, 1881.

<sup>158</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, 1881.

Of the life led by tenants on these pioneer farms the present writer has no recollection but from a conversation with his parents, after this article was written, he discovered that he had spent most of his first year on a Close farm in Osceola County, one and a half miles south of Bigelow, Minnesota, and eight miles north of Sibley. There, on the treeless prairie, shortly after their arrival from Holland in the spring of 1884, the writer's parents took up their abode. Then, having harvested a crop of flax, they decided to abandon farming. Owing to a shortage of houses in Sibley, they had no choice but to spend the autumn and winter months in another of those cheerless tenant houses. Before removing to town on March 1, 1885, they sold their horses and farm machinery to the writer's uncle and aunt who were also recent immigrants from Holland.

A news item in *The Lemars Sentinel* of June 16, 1881, hinted at the promotion of Dutch immigration to north-western Iowa in the following terms:

"Some five or six weeks ago two Hollanders, brothers, named Harry and Mello Dykema came to Lemars. Harry had been a business man in Holland, and Mello had served four and a half years on the Parisian journals. Both are brilliant, talented and energetic. Lemars did not seem a promising field for a foreign journalist and the whilom manager of a great mercantile House, but they were bound to make a career of some sort. Soon the real estate firm of Richardson & Hospers saw in these dashing young men, the ablest of immigration commissioners, and last week Harry was sent back to Holland to direct the tide of homeseekers towards Plymouth and Sioux counties. He will doubtless give a good account of himself, and in two or three months we expect to see several hundred sturdy and well-to-do

Holland farmers, with their families, added to our population.

“In the meantime, Mello, the ex-journalist, is writing letters to the leading papers in Holland, calling the attention of intending emigrants to the advantages of northwestern Iowa. . . . We congratulate Richardson & Hospers in having secured the services of such gifted and active young men, and hope they may prosper in their new home.”

Henry Hospers in 1869 began to promote the immigration of Hollanders to his “colony” in Sioux County not many miles north of Le Mars. Himself a native of The Netherlands and for many years a prominent figure at Pella in Marion County where thousands of fellow-countrymen had found homes since 1847, Mr. Hospers induced a large number of his energetic young neighbors to leave that rapidly filling portion of the State and go with him to found the towns of East Orange (now Alton) and Orange City in northwestern Iowa. Those pioneer farmers of Dutch birth and ancestry blazed the way and thousands of emigrants fresh from Holland afterwards joined their settlement, Le Mars being the nearest railroad town and trade center for many years. For further information on the subject the reader is referred to Van der Zee’s *The Hollanders of Iowa*.

<sup>159</sup> *Macmillan’s Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 68.

<sup>160</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, 12, 1881, September 27, 1883.

## CHAPTER XII

<sup>161</sup> *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 28, 1881.

<sup>162</sup> *Macmillan’s Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 68; *Anamosa Journal*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), June 1, 1881.

<sup>163</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, July 28, October 6, 1881; *Macmillan’s Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 68.

<sup>164</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), May 26, 1880; *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, May 19, December 22, 1881.

<sup>165</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 22-24. See also an article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXII, p. 767.

<sup>166</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 20, 27, March 10, July 14, 1881; *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 67.

<sup>167</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 69.

<sup>168</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 14, 1881; *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXII, p. 766.

<sup>169</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), December 8, 1880.

<sup>170</sup> For brief sketches of these two men, see *History of the Counties of Woodbury and Plymouth, Iowa* (A. Warner & Co., 1890-1891), pp. 527, 747, 784.

On the coming of Scotchmen see *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 14, June 9, 1881; *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), June 23, 1880.

<sup>171</sup> For all these facts see *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, April 7, May 12, August 25, September 15, 1881, March 2, 1882; *History of the Counties of Woodbury and Plymouth, Iowa* (A. Warner & Co., 1890-1891), p. 750.

<sup>172</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), June 8, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 2, 1881, October 13, 1885.

<sup>173</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 29, 1881, October 18, 1883.

<sup>174</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 14, 1881, May 31, 1883.

<sup>175</sup> Mr. Bigelow's statement was unwarranted at the time he wrote. There were two Exeter College, Oxford, men: Henry H. Drake and Percy Atkinson, and F. R. Price, an Oxford blue from Queen's College. James and William



Close, Con Benson, and Jack Wakefield were the only Cambridge men.

<sup>176</sup> See Poultney Bigelow's story in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXII, p. 764.

#### CHAPTER XIII

<sup>177</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 4, 1881.

<sup>178</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 28.

<sup>179</sup> *The London Times*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 15, 1881.

<sup>180</sup> For a good general account of farm pupils, see *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. LXII, pp. 193, 194.

<sup>181</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 24, 1881; *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 67.

<sup>182</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, pp. 3, 4.

It is said that the name "pups" given to the farm pupils originated in the fact that Captain Moreton had from the beginning gone into the raising of thoroughbred dogs on his farm.

<sup>183</sup> The Earl of Ducie died in England in 1921 at the advanced age of ninety-four.

<sup>184</sup> The number was probably exaggerated.

<sup>185</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, pp. 3, 4.

<sup>186</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, p. 5.

<sup>187</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, p. 5

<sup>188</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>189</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, pp. 7, 8.

<sup>190</sup> Mellersh's *The English Colony in Iowa*, p. 6.

<sup>191</sup> For these criticisms of the farm pupil system see *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. LXII, p. 196.

<sup>192</sup> *Carroll Herald*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 3, 1882.

<sup>193</sup> *The LeMars Semi-Weekly Sentinel*, March 17, 1885. See also Will H. Kernan's account for the American Press Association in the issue of January 11, 1887.

#### CHAPTER XIV

<sup>194</sup> See Thomas Hughes's article in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIII, pp. 310-315.

<sup>195</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 17, 1881.

In the *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 16, 1881, appeared the following news item:

"A veteran emigrant in the person of Mrs. Hughes, mother of Thomas Hughes, is on her way to her son's colony at Rugby, East Tennessee. She proposes to vindicate her faith in his success by becoming a member of it. At the age of 83 and over, she starts out to make a home in a new country and among strangers, and her motive is not necessity, but affection. She believes in her son, and having devoted so much of her life to him she crowns it with a last act that is all the more beautiful because it is performed at such a cost. To the old, home ties and local attachments are intensely strong, and this lady cannot be unlike her kind in this respect. She comes to live alone, away from her son, in order that what he is trying to do will not fail if her presence will prevent it. It is pleasant to know that she has been offered a special car to take her by easy stages to her new home, and that every attention is to be paid her on her arrival."

Mr. Adair Colpoys, who first became interested in the Le Mars Colony through the Close pamphlet which was sent

to him in Australia, also visited the Rugby Colony. The present writer called upon him at Le Mars in the summer of 1921 and learned that the site of the Tennessee Colony was poor timber land, stony and partially cleared, with titles in bad condition.

<sup>196</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel* kept Englishmen at Le Mars in touch with the Tennessee experiment. See issues for August 25, September 1, 1881, February 9, December 28, 1882, March 8, 27, 1883.

<sup>197</sup> See the article in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. LXII, p. 193.

#### CHAPTER XV

<sup>198</sup> The writer forgot to mention high-backed tin baths which also found a place in many an Englishman's "luggage".

<sup>199</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 7, 1881, April 11, 1884.

<sup>200</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, November 7, 1883.

<sup>201</sup> *Denison Bulletin*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), January 5, 1881.

<sup>202</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), August 10, 1881.

<sup>203</sup> *Fonda Gazette*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), August 3, 1881.

<sup>204</sup> *Dubuque Telegraph*, May 21, 1881.

<sup>205</sup> *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, July 31, 1881.

<sup>206</sup> *New York Review*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), January 5, 1881.

<sup>207</sup> *The Chicago Tribune*, December 12, 1881.

<sup>208</sup> *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXII, pp. 764-768.

<sup>209</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, pp. 1-32, with a map of Iowa.

<sup>210</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, pp. 65, 67.

Benson's article was recommended to English squires by *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 16, 1881. Robert Benson, a brother of Constantine W. Benson who was a partner of the Close brothers, is to-day the head of Robert Benson and Company, financiers in the city of London. He and Mr. Stickney of St. Paul financed the Chicago and Great Western Railway system.

<sup>211</sup> *Manchester Courier*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 3, 1881.

<sup>212</sup> *Toronto Globe*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 16, 1881.

<sup>213</sup> *Manchester Courier*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 27, 1881.

<sup>214</sup> *London Times*, quoted in *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 15, 1881.

<sup>215</sup> *Punch*, November 12, 1881.

#### CHAPTER XVI

<sup>216</sup> It is hardly necessary to substantiate the statements made in the next few pages of the text: information on the various activities in which Englishmen engaged was obtained from Le Mars newspapers covering the years 1880-1887, as well as from individuals.

<sup>217</sup> The writer visited Le Mars during the summer of 1921 and became indebted to Mr. Colpoys and Mr. Ed Dalton for many statements in this article. Acknowledgments are also



due to Mr. Henry H. Drake of Sioux City with whom the writer spent a very pleasant afternoon talking about the early days. Mr. Drake is an Exeter College, Oxford University, man.

## CHAPTER XVII

<sup>218</sup> *History of the Counties of Woodbury and Plymouth, Iowa* (A. Warner & Co., 1890-1891), pp. 423, 429.

<sup>219</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 25, 1882.

<sup>220</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 31, 1882; *The LeMars Daily Liberal*, August 22, 23, 1882.

<sup>221</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 1, 1883.

<sup>222</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 12, 1882.

<sup>223</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 19, 1882.

<sup>224</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 1, 1883. This newspaper published a supplement, April 5, on the coal discovery for the purpose of attracting settlers.

<sup>225</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 7, 28, 1882, January 18, 1883.

<sup>226</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 25, March 1, 1883.

<sup>227</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 15, 22, June 28, 1883.

<sup>228</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 30, July 5, 12, 1883, January 15, 18, 22, 1884.

<sup>229</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 29, March 9, September 2, 12, 17, October 10, 1884.

Captain Moreton seems to have gone to Illinois and later to Canada. His death was recently reported.

## CHAPTER XVIII

- <sup>230</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), January 21, 1880.
- <sup>231</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), February 4, 1880.
- <sup>232</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 31, April 28, May 5, 1881.
- <sup>233</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 7, 1882.
- <sup>234</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 29, April 5, 1883, December 25, 1885.
- <sup>235</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. XLIV, p. 67.
- <sup>236</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 16, July 7, 1881.
- <sup>237</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 21, 28, 1881.
- <sup>238</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 11, 1881.
- <sup>239</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 9, 1883.
- <sup>240</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 8, 1884, June 7, 1887.
- <sup>241</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), May 19, 1880, August 25, 1882; *The Lemars Sentinel*, May 5, June 2, 1881, May 25, 1882.
- <sup>242</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 16, 23, 1881; *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), July 6, 1881.
- <sup>243</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), July 6, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 7, 1881.
- <sup>244</sup> *Sioux City Journal*, July 1, 1881.
- <sup>245</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 14, September 29, October 13, 1881; *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), July 6, 1881.
- <sup>246</sup> *The LeMars Daily Liberal*, August 19, September 9, 13, 1882; *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 15, October 12, 1882, May 31, October 11, 1883, June 6, 12, August 25, October 7, 1884, June 9, October 2, 1885.

<sup>247</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), August 11, 1882; *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 29, 1881, October 12, 1882.

<sup>248</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 29, 1883.

<sup>249</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 15, 22, February 1, 1884, January 9, 1885.

<sup>250</sup> *The LeMars Daily Liberal*, August 7, 25, 1882; *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 12, 1887. Of this club, G. C. MacLagan was president, C. N. Richards vice president, J. U. Sammis secretary, and F. E. Romanes and Tom Aldersey executive committee.

<sup>251</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 1, October 10, 1884.

<sup>252</sup> Many of these facts were obtained from Mr. Ed Dalton of Le Mars and Mr. Henry H. Drake of Sioux City. See also Freeman's *History of Plymouth County, Iowa*, Vol. I, pp. 430, 431; *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 3, 1885.

<sup>253</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, November 10, 1881, October 12, 1882, April 12, 1883.

<sup>254</sup> *The Le Mars Semi-Weekly Sentinel* gives this account of a typical Derby week in its issue of January 11, 1887.

<sup>255</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 21, 1887.

The only discordant note heard during these jubilee days was the letter of P. J. Dunn protesting against the celebration because Queen Victoria had done nothing to ameliorate conditions in the Empire, least of all in Ireland where the landlords during the years 1841-1851 had been allowed to destroy 269,253 dwellings and in 1849 to evict 50,000 families. — *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 5, 1887.

#### CHAPTER XIX

<sup>256</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), June 2, 9, 16, 1880.

<sup>257</sup> *Sioux City Journal*, quoted in *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), June 16, 1880.

<sup>258</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 14, 1881.

<sup>259</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 3, 1881.

<sup>260</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 30, 1882.

<sup>261</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 29, July 13, 1882.

<sup>262</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 25, 1883, replied as follows to Dacres's stricture: "You ought to be thankful you didn't have a bullet hole bored through you, like the little Irishman had a few weeks ago."

<sup>263</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, June 27, 1884.

<sup>264</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 7, 1884, November 11, 1887.

<sup>265</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 18, 1881.

<sup>266</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 16, 23, May 31, December 21, 1882.

<sup>267</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 20, 27, 1882.

<sup>268</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 28, 1882.

<sup>269</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 22, July 26, November 14, 1883, October 10, 1884.

<sup>270</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 7, 1884, February 3, 24, 1885, January 11, 14, June 21, July 12, 1887.

Charles Dacres is reported as having met his death accidentally in a shooting affray at Yankton, South Dakota.

#### CHAPTER XX

<sup>271</sup> Freeman's *History of Plymouth County, Iowa*, Vol. I, pp. 431, 432. The *Minute Book* of the Prairie Club, which still has rooms but not much support, is in possession of Mr.



Adair Colpoys — minutes of the organization meeting are not recorded. See also *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 10, December 15, 22, 1881, August 24, 1882.

<sup>272</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 25, 1883, January 18, 1884, June 5, 1885.

<sup>273</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 22, 29, 1884, January 13, February 6, 1885.

<sup>274</sup> *Minute Book* of the Prairie Club, p. 71. During the first twelve years of the club's existence, the treasurer's book contains the names of nearly three hundred Britishers. The complete list deserves a place here:

AUBERTIN, J. D.	BLACKWELL, W. F.	COLLEDGE, A. J.
ANSON, J. O.	BANKS, R. F.	CLARKSON, A.
ANSON, O. H.	BURNSIDE, E. F.	COOPER, J. C.
ALDERSEY, T.	BAKER, F. P.	COWAN, J. I.
ASHTON, J. D. W.	BURTON, A. G. T.	COWAN, W. B.
ALLEN, E. T.		CHAMBERLIN, R. F.
ALLEN, C. T. R.	CHAPMAN, M. J.	CARVER, F.
ABBOT, F. W.	CHRISTIAN, H. C.	COLEBANK, S.
ALLAN, W. T. B.	CLOSE, F.	COLSTON, A. V.
ANDREW, O.	CLOSE, J.	COBBE, L. C.
	CLOSE, W.	CORBETT, H. E.
BATHER, G. G.	CLOWES, S.	CLIFTON, W. H.
BENSON, C. F.	CLOSE, J. H.	COKE, R. G.
BENSON, C. W.	CLOWES, W. L.	CLARKE, G. A. C.
BLOMEFIELD, M.	COLLEDGE, A. C.	
BRIGGS, H. E.	COURAGE, H. M.	DACRES, C.
BRIGGS, W. C.	COLPOYS, A. G.	DAWSON, S. B. M.
BRODIE, M. F.	CUNNINGHAM, H. N.	DAWSON, W. B.
BRODIE, F. G.	CUMBERHATCH, L. T.	DEALTRY, T.
BROCKBANK, J. C.	CROFT, G. B.	DENT, A. R. T.
BUCKLAND, J. B.	CRAWLEY, E. M.	DOUGLAS, J.
BRISTOWE, L. H.	COLLINS, J. VICTOR	DOWNING, G. C.
BENECKE, W. E. T.	COLLINS, L. H.	DRAKE, H.
BIDGOOD, H. W.	CARTER, H. E.	DODSWORTH, F. C. S.
BARCHARD, H. S.	CARMICHAEL, J. M. G.	DODSWORTH, M. B.
BLACKWELL, J. H.	CAMPBELL, W. M. O.	DUNCAN, C. M.

- |                   |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| DOWGLASS, T.      | GILMORE, WM. G.  | LORD, A. H. M.    |
| DUFF, W. G.       | GEOFFREY, R.     | LEYCESTER, L.     |
| DE MOLEYNS, E.    | GRAHAM, R. G. M. | LOCKHART, W. C.   |
| DE PLEDGE, H.     | GUINNESS, C.     | LANGDON, G. H.    |
| DUNWATERS, A. G.  |                  | LITTLEDALE, E.    |
|                   | HATHAWAY, H. P.  | LONG, JOHN        |
| ECCLES, C. H.     | HEITLAND, A. R.  | LUCAS, ADOLPHE    |
| ECCLES, P. C.     | HILL, R. G.      | LANE, CHAS.       |
| ELLER, C.         | HILLYARD, H.     |                   |
| ELLER, H.         | HOBART, LORD     | MADDEN, J. B.     |
| ELLER, J.         | HORSBURGH, F.    | MYLIUS, C.        |
| ELLIOTT, GUY P.   | HARPER, A. E.    | MARSH, PERCY      |
| ELLIOTT, N. L.    | HOPKINSON, J.    | MOWBRAY, A.       |
| ELLIOTT, F. N.    | HURLE, J. C.     | MEDD, W. H. B.    |
| EYKYN, F. B.      | HILL, E. T.      | MASTEE, A. C. C.  |
| EDGELL, W. F.     | HULBERT, W. G.   | MACLAGAN, C. D.   |
| EUSTACE, J. S.    | HARVEY, I. A.    | MACLAGAN, G. C.   |
|                   | HOPE, J. G.      | MACLAGAN, R. B.   |
| FARQUHAR, ALBERT  | HOTHAM, GEO.     | MAITLAND, A. W.   |
| FARQUHAR, CHARLES | HANBURY, H.      | MARGESSON, H. P.  |
| FARQUHAR, JAS.    | HEAP, S.         | MARGESSON, M.     |
| FARQUHAR, JOE     | HENSLOW, G. G.   | MARGESSON, R.     |
| FARQUHAR, MOWBRAY | HAWTREY, G.      | MILNE, S.         |
| FARQUHAR, WILL R. | HARRISON, R. W.  | MORETON, F. J.    |
| FULLBROOK, E. A.  | HYDE, E.         | MORETON, H. J.    |
| FULLBROOK, R.     | HANSON, S. G.    | MORETON, CAPT. R. |
| FENTON, JAMES     | HARBORD, R. A.   | MORGAN, T.        |
| FENTON, R. O.     |                  | MANSEL, H. G.     |
| FFOULKES, S. W.   | JERVIS, C. L.    | MONTGOMERY, R. H. |
| FIGGIS, W. W.     | JERVIS, R. C.    |                   |
| FLOWERS, C. A.    | JOHNSON, D. G.   | NEWMARCH, L. A.   |
| FAIRBAIRN, F. R.  | JAMESON, S. B.   | NEWMAN, A.        |
|                   |                  | NESFIELD, E.      |
| GARNETT, G.       | KENNARD, R. B.   | NASH, J. R.       |
| GASKELL, S. W.    | KIRWAN, G.       | NICHOLSON, B.     |
| GEE, A.           | KIRWAN, L.       | NICHOLSON, R.     |
| GIBSON, A. B. C.  | MAITLAND         |                   |
| GOLIGHTLY, C. H.  | KAY, CHAS.       | OLDFIELD, C. B.   |
| GRAYSON, J. H.    | KING, E. W. G.   | ORDE, JULIAN W.   |
| GROUSE, R.        |                  |                   |
| GUNNER, H. D.     | LANGLEY, A.      | PAGET, A. H.      |
| GREY, ALGERNON    | LASCELLES, A. G. | PALEY, F.         |

PARKE, A.	RICHARDS, H. O. K.	THURSBY, E. H.
PARKE, C.	RICHARDS, H. W.	TAYLOUR, E. E.
PARKE, E. R.	RATLIFF, THOS.	THELWELL, E. L.
PARKE, W.		TARLETON, H.
PAYNE, F.	SIMMS, H. A.	TROTTER, H. G.
PAYNE, R.	SIMPSON, W. D.	
PAYNE, W. W.	SUTTON, A. T.	VERNON, W. G.
PAUL, H.	STONER, W. G.	HARCOURT
PAULTON, W.	STUBBS, J. W. H.	VAN SOMMER, J.
PAULTON, W. A.	SOWERBY, C.	VEAL, F. K.
PIERCE, J. T.	STEVENS, W. H. P.	
PRESCOTT, P. E.	STOUGHTON, H.	WAKEFIELD, J. W.
PRESTON, A. G.	SHARP, R. W.	WALKER, RICHARD
PRESTON, J. H.	SHARP, W. A.	WALKER, ROBERT
PRICE, F. R.	STANIER, GUY	WALLER, H. N.
PRICE, H. J.	SUGDEN, HON. H. F.	WANN, W. H.
POTTER, R. E.	SINCLAIR, A. C.	WARREN, J. B.
PARDOE, O. T.	STURGESS, A. H.	WATSON, H. A.
PHILSON, MR.	STURGESS, EDW. D.	WATSON, J. G.
PATTEN, H. S.	STATTER, G. F.	WILD, J.
	SMYTH, CHAS. G.	WILLIAMSON, E. P.
RAYMOND, O. T.	STARKY, B. B.	WINSTANLEY, E.
RICKARDS, H.	SWINTON, J. C. B.	WAKE, T.
ROBERTS, F. C.	SMALLEY, J.	WALKINSHAW, J.
ROBERTSON, C. L.	STANHOPE, R.	WRAIGHT, P.
ROBERTSON, E. F.	SWINBURNE, W.	WEBSTER, D.
ROBINSON, CAPT. F. R.		WILSON, G.
ROMANES, F. E.	TAYLOR, H. L.	WADDILOVE, J. C.
RONALDSON, A.	TAYLOR, L.	WEIR, A. Y.
ROLLO, HON. ERIC	TAYLOR, T. C.	
ROLLO, HON. H. E.	THOMSON, B. H.	YOUNG, DAVID A.
REID, A. A. P.	TOTTENHAM, E. H.	YOUNG, WM.
REID, F. R.	TOUCH, J. W.	YONGE, F. A.
RICHARDS, G. J.	TIBBITT, J.	

<sup>275</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), January 21, 1880; *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 12, July 7, 1881, June 15, 1882, February 29, June 6, October 7, 1884, June 9, 1885.

<sup>276</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 3, 1885. These journeys to and from England were chronicled in the Le Mars newspapers with such frequency that references are not deemed important here.

<sup>277</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, December 22, 1881, January 5, 1882.

<sup>278</sup> *New Mexico News and Express*, December 31, 1881.

<sup>279</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 3, March 24, April 14, 1881. The Paullin boys had a great wheat farm of 4000 acres in Elkhorn Township, Plymouth County, and another in O'Brien County. See also Perkins's *History of O'Brien County, Iowa*, p. 352.

The death of Daniel Paullin is recorded in the following editorial:

“Mr. James B. Close received word last week of the death of a very dear friend of his, D. Paullin, Esq. late of Quincy, Illinois, at Dubuque, on Thursday April 7th. It was largely through Mr. Paullin's favorable representations that the Close Bros. were induced to come here, for in their intercourse with him they had learned to attach great weight to his judgment. They had found him to be a gentleman of integrity and honor, and the longer they knew him, the more they came to respect and revere him. About a year ago Wm. B. Close married Mr. Paullin's daughter, Mary, in New York, and went to England where they now are. Henry and D. Edward, sons of the deceased are well known here, especially the former who at present resides in Cherokee, and very largely engaged in stock raising. Though the elder Paullin was wholly unknown to our people, yet the fact that he was remotely instrumental in turning such a healthy stream of home seekers in this direction, entitles his memory to grateful recognition.” — *The Lemars Sentinel*, April 14, 1881.

Henry and D. Edward Paullin, graduates of Harvard, became engaged in stock farming, the former at Cherokee and the latter on the site of the present town of Paullina in O'Brien County.

<sup>280</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 6, 1881, May 11, 1882, August 25, 1884.



James B. Close and Samuel H. Graves later married sisters of Mrs. Fred B. Close.

<sup>281</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 29, 1881. The letter was published in *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 6, 1881, and reads as follows:

“Lemars, Iowa, 27th September 1881.

DEAR MADAM:—As representing probably the largest colony of Englishmen in the United States, we venture to intrude upon your great sorrow so far as to send you a letter expressing our hearty sympathy with you in your loss.

“You stand in the sad position of chief mourner among a world of mourners. The sorrow by which all are touched is focussed upon you. In the presence of such grief as yours we cannot but stand awe struck.

“We can assure you that the nobility of the late President’s character both public and private, and his patient courage and resignation in the face of death, have excited our warmest admiration.

“We can only hope and pray that the strength which has sustained you through the late long, patient struggle between life and death, may be granted to you in the remaining duties of life. We are Madam,

Yours in true sympathy,

H. N. CUNNINGHAM, G. C. MACLAGAN,  
 R. MORETON, JOHN H. GRAYSON,  
 JAMES B. CLOSE, JAMES S. FENTON,  
 J. C. COOPER.

<sup>282</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 2, October 19, November 9, 1882, March 28, 1884.

Captain Moreton made an address at the graves of Hornby and Dalton, on the occasion of a double funeral. — *The Daily Liberal* (Le Mars), January 30, 1882.

<sup>283</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, January 5, March 28, 1884, January 27, 1885.

#### CHAPTER XXI

<sup>284</sup> *The Iowa Liberal* (Le Mars), April 6, July 27, 1881; *The Lemars Sentinel*, March 10, 17, June 2, July 28, August 11, 1881; *Records of St. George’s Parish* (Le Mars), pp. 5, 8.

<sup>285</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 6, August 11, 25, 1881, November 7, 1883.

The reference to Rev. Howard's meeting Jack Wakefield at a wine is likely to be misconstrued by American readers: it means that when the proctor was making his rounds at Cambridge as the university's police officer he encountered Jack drinking wine at some time or place prohibited by the university statutes. Under such circumstances the proctor took his name and college address and requested him to appear next day to pay the fine prescribed for such an offense. This system of discipline still prevails at Oxford and Cambridge and contributes somewhat to their treasuries.

<sup>286</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, September 15, October 6, 20, 27, November 10, 1881, January 26, July 13, 1882, January 18, 1883.

<sup>287</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, July 27, December 28, 1882. See also *Journal of the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Iowa*, 1887, p. 80, 1890, p. 20.

<sup>288</sup> *The Iowa Churchman*. See also *The Lemars Sentinel*, October 17, 1882, February 8, November 7, 1883.

<sup>289</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, February 5, April 8, 1884, January 9, June 9, 1885, June 17, 24, 1887. See also *Records of St. George's Parish (Le Mars)*, pp. 107-115, 136.

<sup>290</sup> *The Lemars Sentinel*, August 17, 1882, April 22, 1884, January 6, 13, 27, 1885.

<sup>291</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Arthur E. Marsh had come from England, Mr. Marsh being at Le Mars as early as 1880. Their son, Arthur Henry (born on July 12, 1883), was baptized at Calliope by Rev. H. N. Cunningham. — *Records of St. George's Parish (Le Mars)*, p. 143.

Since his ordination, Rev. Marsh has for many years served as rector at Blair, Nebraska. His son graduated from the

University of Nebraska; was elected Rhodes Scholar for Nebraska in 1905; studied theology at Keble College, Oxford; received the degrees of B. A. and M. A. from the University of Oxford; was ordained a priest in the United States; and was vicar in charge of St. Paul's Church in Omaha when war was declared against Germany in 1917. He became a chaplain with the rank of first lieutenant, and sailed for France on July 30, 1918. On the night of October 3, after only two months of service, he was gassed and died of pneumonia at Vittel in the Vosges on October 7th. The younger Marsh was well known to the writer who spent the same three years at Oxford and had the pleasure of his company on vacations in North Wales, the Scandinavian countries, and Germany.

<sup>292</sup> Mr. Henry H. Drake married Mr. Richmond's daughter and Sioux City has been their home for many years.

<sup>293</sup> *Journal of the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Iowa*, 1887, pp. 7, 9, 65-70, 1890, pp. 40, 41, 1893, pp. 7, 8, 114.

#### CHAPTER XXII

<sup>294</sup> Close's *Farming in North-Western Iowa*, p. 24; *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXII, pp. 766, 767.

<sup>295</sup> These facts were gathered from interviews with Mr. Ed Dalton of Le Mars and Mr. Henry H. Drake of Sioux City and from a letter written by William B. Close on November 30, 1921.

<sup>296</sup> These words with music, according to Mr. Henry H. Drake, were written about the year 1884 by R. T. Patrick and W. D. Harmon to be sung "any old time".

<sup>297</sup> See footnote 144.

<sup>298</sup> It is interesting to note the strength of the British-

born element in the population of the seven counties of northwestern Iowa, since 1880, omitting a considerable number of British-Americans:

COUNTIES	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1905	1915	1920
<i>Plymouth</i>								
English	365	601	616	489	377	303	204	184
Irish	291	444	385	332	260	205	159	119
Scotch	70	120	120	105	75	81	72	65
Welsh		13	20	21	18	12	8	12
<i>Woodbury</i>								
English	230	636	977	658	666	648	845	731
Irish	512	1159	1271	988	909	855	675	548
Scotch	61	141	236	183	182	197	205	192
Welsh		15	32	19	21	13	26	25
<i>Cherokee</i>								
English	185	275	261	257	224	199	198	164
Irish	179	246	247	249	223	196	149	131
Scotch	80	116	134	107	107	95	67	57
Welsh		11	10	31	27	13	8	9
<i>O'Brien</i>								
English	91	154	196	156	150	125	238	94
Irish	103	137	193	199	167	137	86	62
Scotch	32	87	81	66	69	67	59	45
Welsh		11	10	11	14	9	7	7
<i>Sioux</i>								
English	60	146	203	159	133	103	70	47
Irish	102	164	236	205	191	149	72	65
Scotch	10	23	39	31	26	18	7	6
Welsh		10	3	8	2	3	1	3
<i>Osceola</i>								
English	64	128	123	103	69	59	37	27
Irish	38	68	49	52	70	58	28	23
Scotch	9	54	30	24	17	10	7	2
Welsh		4	26	9	5	2	5	3
<i>Lyon</i>								
English	21	97	172	103	81	70	49	42
Irish	23	47	93	99	98	84	48	27
Scotch	9	16	31	40	30	14	20	7
Welsh		2	5	6	4	4	2	3

For these figures see *United States Census*, 1880, Vol. I, pp. 506-508, 1890, Vol. II, pp. 628, 629, 1900, Vol. I, Pt. 1,



pp. 750, 751; *Population: Iowa, Composition and Characteristics of the Population*, 1920, pp. 21, 22; and *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 164-166, 1895, pp. 304-307, 1905, pp. 517-520, and 1915, pp. 462-464.

In 1885 and 1895 the British-born inhabitants of towns were separately reported and the returns for Le Mars and Sioux City were as follows:

<i>Le Mars</i>			<i>Sioux City</i>		
	1885	1895		1885	1895
Canadians	132	162	Canadians	618	636
English	154	144	English	341	428
Irish	102	94	Irish	872	672
Scotch	29	26	Scotch	95	109

See *Census of Iowa*, 1885, pp. 61, 81, 1895, pp. 332, 333.

<sup>299</sup> The Western Town Lot Company platted all these towns in 1882 and 1883 and named them after the Duke of Sutherland, Sir Richard Granville (the navigator and explorer), Henry Ireton (Oliver Cromwell's son-in-law), Hawarden (William E. Gladstone's home), Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, and Colonel Alcester. Plymouth and O'Brien counties had been created earlier and were named in honor of the landing place of the Pilgrim Fathers and William Smith O'Brien, the leader of the movement for Irish independence in 1848. The name "Alton" can also be traced back to a town in England. The village of Archer in O'Brien County was named by an Englishman, John H. Archer, who has been heavily interested in land in that neighborhood for many years.

The Western Town Lot Company was incorporated in the interest of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway Company for the purpose of securing, subdividing, and platting the land needed for town sites, and for placing lots on the market at reasonable rates so that settlers should not be at the mercy of speculators who usually demanded extortionate

prices. All the proceeds secured from the sale of the lots reached the treasury of the railroad company. — *A History of the Origin of the Place Names Connected with the Chicago and North Western Railway* (1908), p. 35.

The Close brothers did not go in for town-planning, but their village of Quorn in southeastern Plymouth County received its name from the place in Leicestershire, England, where Fred Close had enjoyed many a holiday in fox-hunting. The Quorn Hunt is perhaps the best known in England to-day.



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